

THE POETICAL WORKS
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VOL. III.

*KING VICTOR AND KING CHARLES—
DRAMATIC LYRICS—
THE RETURN OF THE DRUSES.*

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KING VICTOR & KING CHARLES.

A TRAGEDY.

So far as I know, this Tragedy is the first artistic consequence of what Voltaire termed "a terrible event without consequences," and although it professes to be historical, I have taken more pains to arrive at the history than most readers would think me for particularizing since acquainted, as I will hope them to be, with the chief circumstances of Victor's remarkable European career—nor quite ignorant of the sad and surprising facts I am about to reproduce (a tolerable account of which is to be found, for instance, in Abbé Roman's *Acet*, or even the fifth of Lord Orrery's Letters from Italy)—I cannot expect them to be varied, nor desirous of becoming so, in all the detail of the memoirs, correspondence, and relations of the time. From these only may be obtained a knowledge of the fiery and audacious temper, unscrupulous selfishness, profound dissimulation, and singular fertility in resources, of Victor—the extreme and painful sensibility, prolonged immaturity of powers, earnest good purpose and vacillating will of Charles—the noble and right woman's manliness of his wife—and the ill-considered rashness and subsequent better-advised rectitude of D'Osmia. When I say, therefore, that I cannot but believe my statement (combining as it does what appears correct in Voltaire and plausible in Condorcet) more true to person and thing than any it has hitherto been my fortune to meet with, no doubt my word will be taken, and my evidence spared as readily.—R. B.

London, 1842

PERSONS.

VICTOR AMADEUS, First King of Sardinia.

CHARLES EMMANUEL, his Son, Prince of Piedmont.

POLYXENA, Wife of Charles.

D'ORMEA, Minister.

SCENE.—The Council Chamber of Rivoli Palace; near Turin, communicating with a Hall at the back, an Apartment to the left and another to the right of the stage.

TIME, 1730-1.



KING VICTOR & KING CHARLES.

FIRST YEAR, 1730.—KING VICTOR.

PART I.

CHARLES, POLYXENA.

Cha. You think so? Well, I do not.

Pol. My beloved,

All must clear up ; we shall be happy yet :

This cannot last for ever—oh, may change

To-day or any day !

Cha. —May change? Ah yes—

May change !

Pol. Endure it, then.

Cha. No doubt, a life

Like this drags on, now better and now worse.

My father may . . . may take to loving me ;

And he may take D'Ormea closer yet .

To counsel him ;—may even cast off her

—That bad Sebastian ; but he also may .

. . Or no, Polyxena, my only friend,

He may not force you from me ?

Pol. Now, force me
 From ~~you~~—me, close by you as if there gloomed
 No Sebastians, no D'Ormeas on our path—
 At Rivoli or Turin, still at hand,
 Arch-counsellor, prime confidant . . . force me !

Cha. Because I felt as sure, as I feel sure .
 We clasp hands now, of being happy once.
 Young was I, quite neglected, nor concerned
 By the world's business that engrossed so much
 My father and my brother : if I peered
 From out my privacy,—amid the crash
 And blaze of nations, domineered those two.
 'T was war, peace—France our foe, now England,
 friend—

In love with Spain—at feud with Austria ! Well—
 I wondered, laughed a moment's laugh for pride
 In the chivalrous couple, then let drop
 My curtain—" I am out of it," I said—
 When . . .

Pol. You have told me, Charles !

Cha. *Polyxena—*

When suddenly,—a warm March day, just that !
 Just so much sunshine as the cottage child
 Basks in delighted, while the cottager
 Takes off his bonnet, as he ceases work,
 To catch the more of it—and it must fall
 Heavily on my brother ! Had you seen
 Philip—the lion-featured ! not like me !

Pol. I know—

Cha. And Philip's mouth yet fast to mine,
His dead cheek on my cheek, his arm still round
My neck,—they bade me rise, “for I was heir
To the Duke,” they said, “the right hand of the Duke :”
Till then he was my father, not the Duke !
So . . let me finish . . the whole intricate
World's business their dead boy was born to, I
Must conquer,—ay, the brilliant thing he was,
I, of a sudden must be : my faults, my follies,
—All bitter truths were told me, all at once,
To end the soonest. What I simply styled
Their overlooking me, had been contempt :
How should the Duke employ himself, forsooth,
With such an one, while lordly Philip rode
By him their Turin through ? But he was punished,
And must put up with—me ! ’T was sad enough
To learn my future portion and submit.
And then the wear and worry, blame on blame !
For, spring-sounds in my ears, spring-smells about,
How could I but grow dizzy in their pent
Dim palace-rooms at first ? My mother's look
As they discussed my insignificance,
She and my father, and I sitting by,—
I bore, I knew how brave a son they missed ;
Philip had gaily run state-papers through,
While Charles was spelling at them painfully !
But Victor was my father spite of that.
“Duke Victor's entire life has been,” I said,
“Innumerable efforts to one end ;

“ And on the point now of that end’s success,
 “ Our Ducal turning to a Kingly crown,
 “ Where ’s time to be reminded ’t is his child
 “ He spurns ? ” And so I suffered—scarcely suffered
 Since I had you at length !

Pol. —To serve in place
 Of monarch, minister and mistress, Charles !

Cha. But, once that crown obtained, then was ’t not like
 Our lot would alter ? “ When he rests, takes breath,
 “ Glances around, and sees who ’s left to love—
 “ Now that my mother ’s dead, sees I am left—
 “ Is it not like he ’ll love me at the last ? ”
 Well, Savoy turns Sardinia ; the Duke ’s King :
 Could I—precisely then—could you expect
 His harshness to redouble ? These few months
 Have been . . have been . . Polyxena, do you
 And God conduct me, or I lose myself !
 What would he have ? What is ’t they want with me ?
 Him with this mistress and this minister,
 —You see me and you hear him ; judge us both !
 Pronounce what I should do, Polyxena !

Pol. Endure, endure, beloved ! Say you not
 He is your father ? All ’s so incident
 To novel sway ! Beside, our life must change :
 Or you ’ll acquire his kingcraft, or he ’ll find
 Harshness a sorry way of teaching it.
 I bear this—not that there ’s so much to bear.

Cha. You bear ? Do not I know that you, tho’ bound
 To silence for my sake, are perishing

Piecemeal beside me? And how otherwise
 When every crevice from the hideous Court
 Is stopped; the Minister to dog me, here—
 The Mistress posted to entrap you, there?
 And thus shall we grow old in such a life;
 Not careless, never estranged,—but old: to alter
 Our life, there is so much to alter!

Pol.

Come—

Is it agreed that we forego complaint
 Even at Turin, yet complain we here
 At Ravello? 'T were wiser you announced
 Our presence to the King. What's now afoot
 I wonder?—Not that any more's to dread
 Than every day's embarrassment: but guess
 For me, why train so fast succeeded train
 On the high-road, each gayer still than each!
 I noticed your Archbishop's pursuivant,
 The sable cloak and silver cross; such pomp
 Bodes . . . what now, Charles? Can you conceive?

Cha.

Not I.

Pol. A matter of some moment—

Cha.

There's our life!

Which of the group of loiterers that stare
 From the lime-avenue, divines that I—
 About to figure presently, he thinks,
 In face of all assembled—am the one
 Who knows precisely least about it?

Pol.

Tush!

D'Ormea's contrivance!

Cha. Ay, how others say
Should the young Prince serve for the old King's foil?
So that the simplest courtier may remark
T were idle raising parties for a Prince
Content to linger D'Omea's laughing stock
Something, 't is like, about that weary business

*(Paintin, to figures he has laid down, and a rich POLYTRON
or minus*

Not that I comprehend thine words, of course,
After all last night's study

Pol. The faint heart!
Why, as we rode and you rehearsed just now
Its substance (that's the folded speech I mean
Concerning the Reduction of the Fiefs)
—What would you have?—I fancied while you spoke,
Some tones were just your father's

Cha. Flattery!

Pol. I fancied so —and here lurks, sure enough,
My note upon the Spanish Claims! You've mastered
The fief speech thoroughly. This other, mind,
Is an opinion you deliver,—stay,
But read it slowly over once to me,
Read—there's bare time, you read it firmly—loud
—Rather loud, looking in his face,—don't sink
Your eye once—ay, thus! “If Spain claims . . .” begin
—Just as you look at me!

Cha. At you! Oh truly,
You have I seen, say, marshalling your troops,
Dismissing councils, or, through doors ajar,

Head sunk on hand, devoured by slow chagrins
 —Then radiant, for a crown had all at once
 Seemed possible again! I can behold
 Him, whose least whisper ties my spirit fast,
 In this sweet brow, nought could divert me from
 Save objects like Sebastian's shameless lip,
 Or worse, the clipped grey hair and dead white face
 And dwindling eye as if it ached with guile,
 D'Ormea wears . . .

[*As he looks her, enter from the KING's apartment D'ORMEA.*

I said he would divert

My kisses from your brow!

D'O. [*Aside.*] Here! So, King Victor
 Spoke truth for once: and who's ordained, but I
 To make that memorable? Both in call,
 As he declared! Were't better gnash the teeth,
 Or laugh outright now?

Cha. [*to POL.*] What's his visit for?

D'O. [*Aside.*] I question if they even speak to me.

Pol. [*to CHA.*] Face the man! He'll suppose you
 fear him, else.

[*Aloud.*] The Marquis bears the King's command, no
 doubt?

D'O. [*Aside.*] Precisely!—If I threatened him,
 perhaps?

Well, this at least is punishment enough!
 Men used to promise punishment would come.

Cha. Deliver the King's message, Marquis—

D'O. [*Aside.*]

Ah—

So anxious for his fate? [*Aloud.*] A word, my Prince,
Before you see your father—just one word
Of counsel!

Cha. Oh, your counsel certainly!
Polyxena, the Marquis counsels us!
Well, sir? Be brief, however!

D'O. What? You know
As much as I?—preceded me, most like,
In knowledge! So! ('T is in his eye, beside—
His voice: he knows it, and his heart's on flame
Already!) You surmise why you, myself,
Del Borgo, Spava, fifty nobles more,
Are summoned thus?

Cha. Is the Prince used to know,
At any time, the pleasure of the King,
Before his minister?—Polyxena,
Stay here till I conclude my task: I feel
Your presence (smile not) through the walls, and take
Fresh heart. The King's within that chamber?

D'O. [*Passing the table whereon a paper lies, exclaims, as he
glances at it,* "Spain!"

Pol. [*Aside to Cha.*] Tarry awhile: what ails the
minister?

D'O. Madam, I do not often trouble you.
The Prince loathes, and you loathe me—let that pass!
But since it touches him and you, not me,
Bid the Prince listen!

Pol. [*to CHA.*] Surely you will listen
—Deceit?—Those fingers crumpling up his vest?

Cha. Deceitful to the very fingers' ends !

D'O. [*who has approached them, overlooks the other paper*
CHARLES continues to hold.

My project for the Fiefs ! As I supposed !
Sir, I must give you light upon those measures
—For this is mine, and that I spied of Spain,
Mine too !

Cha. Release me ! Do you gloze on me
Who bear in the world's face (that is, the world
You make for me at Turin) your contempt ?
—Your measure ?—When was not any hateful task
D'Ormea's imposition ? Leave my robe !
What post can I bestow, what grant concede ?
Or do you take me for the King ?

D'O. Not I !

Not yet for King,—not for, as yet, thank God,
One who in . . shall I say a year, a month ?
Ay !—shall be wretcheder than e'er was slave
In his Sardinia,—Europe's spectacle
And the world's 'bye-word ! What ? The Prince
aggrieved

That I excluded him our counsels ? Here

[Touching the paper in CHARLES's hand.

Accept a method of extorting gold
From Savoy's nobles, who must wring its worth
In silver first from tillers of the soil,
Whose hinds again have to contribute brass,
To make up the amount : there's counsel, sir
My counsel, one year old ; and the fruit, this—

Savoy 's become a mass of misery
 And wrath, which one man has to meet—the King :
 You 're not the King ! Another counsel, sir !
 Spain entertains a project (here it lies)
 Which, guessed, makes Austria offer that same King
 Thus much to baffle Spain ; he promises ;
 Then comes Spain, breathless lest she be forestalled,
 Her offer follows ; and he promises . . .

Cha. —Promises, sir, when he before agreed
 To Austria's offer ?

D'O. That 's a counsel, Prince ! .
 But past our foresight, Spain and Austria (choosing
 To make their quarrel up between themselves
 Without the intervention of a friend) . . .
 Produce both treaties, and both promises . . .

Cha. How ?

D'O. Prince, a counsel !—And the fruit of that ?
 Both parties covenant afresh, to fall
 Together on their friend, blot out his name,
 Abolish him from Europe. So, take note,
 Here 's Austria and here 's Spain to fight against,
 And what sustains the King but Savoy here,
 A miserable people mad with wrongs ?
 You 're not the King !

Cha. Polyxena, you said
 All would clear up : all does clear up to me !

D'O. Clear up ? 'T is no such thing to envy, then ?
 You see the King's state in its length and breadth ?
 You blame me now for keeping you aloof

From counsels and the fruit of counsels?—Wait
Till I explain this morning's business!

Cha. [*Aside.*]

No—

Stoop to my father, yes,—D'Ormea, no;
—The King's son, not to the King's counsellor!
I will do something, but at least retain
The credit of my deed! [*Aloud.*] Then it is this
You now expressly come to tell me?

D'O.

This

To tell! You apprehend me?

Cha.

Perfectly.

Further, D'Ormea, you have shown yourself,
For the first time these many weeks and months,
Disposed to do my bidding?

D'O.

From the heart!

Cha. Acquaint my father, first, I wait his pleasure:
Next . . . or, I'll tell you at a fitter time.
Acquaint the King!

D'O. [*Aside.*]

If I 'scape Victor yet!

First, to prevent this stroke at me: if not,—
Then, to avenge it! [*To CHA.*] Gracious sir, I go. [*Goes.*]

Cha. God, I forbore! Which more offends, that man
Or that man's master? Is it come to this?
Have they supposed (the sharpest insult yet)
I needed e'en his intervention? No!
No—dull am I, conceded,—but so dull,
Scarcely! Their step decides me.

Pol.

How decides?

Cha. You would be freed D'Ormea's eye and hers?

—Could fly the court with me and live content ?
 So, this it is for which the knights assemble !
 The whispers and the closeting of late,
 The savagness and insolence of old,
 —For this !

Pol. What mean you ?

Cha. How ? You fail to catch
 Their clever plot ? I missed it, but could you ?
 These last two months of care to inculcate
 How dull I am,—D'Ormea's present visit
 To prove that, being dull, I might be worse
 Were I a King—as wretched as now dull—
 You recognise in it no winding up
 Of a long plot ?

Pol. Why should there be a plot ?

Cha. The crown's secure now ; I should shame the
 crown—

An old complaint ; the point is, how to gain,
 My place for one, more fit in Victor's eyes,
 His mistress the Sebastian's child.

Pol. In truth ?

Cha. They dare not quite dethrone Sardinia's Prince :
 But they may descant on my dulness till
 They sting me into even praying them !
 Grant leave to hide my head, resign my state,
 And end the coil. * Not see now ? In a word,
 They'd have me tender them myself my rights*
 As one incapable ;—some cause for that,
 Since I delayed thus long to see their drift !

I shall apprise the King he may resume
My rights this moment.

Pol. Pause! I dare not think
So ill of Victor.

Cha. Think no ill of him!

Pol.—Nor think him, then, so shallow as to suffer
His purpose be divined thus easily.
And yet—you are the last of a great line;
There a great heritage at stake; new days
Seemed to await this newest of the realms
Of Europe.—Charles, you must withstand this!

Cha. Ah—

You dare not then renounce the splendid Court
For one whom all the world despises? Speak!

Pol. My gentle husband, speak I will, and truth.
Were this as you believe, and I once sure
Your duty lay in so renouncing rule,
I could . . . could? Oh what happiness it were—
To live, my Charles, and die, alone with you!

Cha. I grieve I asked you. To the presence, then!
By this, D'Ormea acquaints the King, no doubt,
He fears I am too simple for mere hints,
And that no less will serve than Victor's mouth
Demonstrating in council what I am.
I have not breathed, I think, these many years!

Pol. Why, it may be—if he desire to wed
That woman, call legitimate her child.

Cha. You see as much? Oh, let his will have way!
You'll not repent confiding in me, love?

There's many a brighter spot in Piedmont, far,
 Than Rivoli. I'll seek him: or, suppose
 You hear first how I mean to speak my mind?
 —Loudly and firmly both, this time, be sure!
 I yet may see your Rhine-land, who can tell?
 Once away, ever then away! I breathe.

Pol. And I too breathe.

Cha.

Come, my Polyxena

KING VICTOR: PART II.

Enter KING VICTOR, bearing the regalia on a cushion, from his apartment. He calls loudly.

D'Ormea!—for patience fails me, treading thus
 Among the obscure trains I have laid,—my knights
 Safe in the hall here—in that anteroom,
 My son,—D'Ormea, where? Of this, one touch—

[Laying down the crown.]

This fireball to these mute black cold trains—then
 Outbreak enough!

[Contemplating it.] To lose all, after all!

This, glancing o'er my house for ages—shaped,
 Brave meteor, like the crown of Cyprus now,
 Jerusalem, Spain, England, every change

The braver,—and when I have clutched a prize

My ancestry died wan with watching for,

To lose it!—by a slip, a fault, a trick

Learnt to advantage once and not unlearned

When past the use,—“just this once more” (I thought)
 ‘ Use it with Spain and Austria happily,
 ‘ And then away with trick ! ” An oversight
 I’d have repaired thrice over, any time
 These fifty years, must happen now ! There’s peace
 At length, and I, to make the most of peace,
 Ventured my project on our people here,
 As needing not their help : which Europe knows,
 And means, cold blooded, to disown herself
 (Apart from possibilities of war)
 To crush the new made King—who ne’er till now
 I used her As Duke, I lost each foot of earth
 And I gaped at her my name was left, my sword
 I felt ‘t was left ! But she can take, she knows,
 The crown, herself conceded . . .

That’s to try,
 Kind Europe ! My career’s not closed as yet !
 This boy was ever subject to my will,
 Timid and tame—the fitter ! D’Ormea, too—
 What if the sovereign also rid himself
 Of thee, his prime of parasites ?—I delay !
 D’Ormea ! [*As D’ORMEA enters, the King seats himself.*

• My son, the Prince—attends he ?

D’O

Sir,

He does attend. The crown prepared !—it seems
 That you persist in your resolve.

Eu.

Who’s come ?

‘The chancellor and the chamberlain ?’ My knights ?

D’O. The whole Annunziata.—If, my liege,

VOL. III.

Your fortune had not tottered worse than now . . .

Vic. Del Borgo has drawn up the schedules? mine—
My son's, too? Excellent! Only, beware
Of the least blunder, or we look but fools.
First, you read the Annulment of the Oaths;
Del Borgo follows . . . no, the Prince shall sign,
Then let Del Borgo read the Instrument:
On which, I enter.

D'O. Sir, this may be truth;
You, sir, may do as you affect—may break
Your engine, me, to pieces: try at least
If not a spring remain worth saving! Take
My counsel as I've counselled many times!
What if the Spaniard and the Austrian threat?
There's England, Holland, Venice—which ally
Select you?

Vic. Aha! Come, D'Ormea,—“truth”
Was on your lip a minute since. Allies?
I've broken faith with Venice, Holland, England
—As who knows if not you?

D'O. But why with me
Break faith—with one ally, your best, break faith?

Vic. When first I stumbled on you, Marquis—'t was
At Mondovi—a little lawyer's clerk . . .

D'O. Therefore your soul's ally ~~was~~ who brought you
through
Your quarrel with the Pope, at pains enough—
Who simply echoed you in these affairs—
• On whom you cannot therefore visit these

Affairs' ill fortune—whom you trust to guide
You safe (y^es, ~~on~~ my soul) through these affairs !

Vic. I was about to notice, had you not
Prevented me, that since that great town kept
With its chicane D'Ormea's satchel stuffed
And D'Ormea's self sufficiently recluse,
He missed a sight —my naval armament
When I burned Toulon. How the skiff exults
Upon the galliot's wave !—rises its height,
O'ertops it even ; but the great wave bursts,
And heft deep in the horrible profound
Buries itself the galliot : shall the skiff
'Think to escape the sea's black trough in turn ?
Apply this : you have been my minister
—Next me, above me possibly ;—sad post,
Huge care, abundant lack of peace of mind ;
Who would desiderate the eminence ?
You gave your soul to get it , you 'd yet give
Your soul to keep it, as I mean you shall,
D'Ormea ! What if the wave ebbed with me ?
Whereas it cants you to another crest ;
I toss you to my son ; ride out your ride !

L^oO. Ah, you so much despise me ?

Vic.

You, D'Ormea ?

Nowise and I 'll inform you why. A king
Must in his time have many ministers, • • •
And I 've been rash enough to part with mine.
When I thought proper, Of the tribe, not one
(. . O'wait, did I misse ? . . ah, just the same !)

Not one of them, ere his remonstrance reached
 The length of yours, but has assured me (commonly
 Standing much as you stand,—or nearer, say,
 The door to make his exit on his speech)
 —I should repent of what I did. D'Ormea,
 Be candid, you approached it when I bade you
 Prepare the schedules ! But you stopped in time
 You have not so assured me : how should I
 Despise you then ?

Enter CHARLES.

Vic. [changing his tone.] Are you instructed ? ' Do
 My order, point by point ! About it, sir !

D'O. You so despise me ! *[Aside.]* One last stay
 remains—

The boy's discretion there

[To CHARLES.] For your sake, Prince,
 I pleaded, wholly in your interest,
 To save you from this fate !

Cha. [Aside.] Must I be told
 The Prince was supplicated for—by him ?

Vic. [to D'O.] Apprise Del Borgo, Spava and the rest,
 Our son attends them ; then return.

D'O. One word !

Cha. [Aside.] A moment's pause and they would drive
 me hence,

I do believe.

D'O. [Aside.] Let but the boy be firm !

Vic. You disobey !

Cha. [To D'O.] You do not, disobey :

Me, at least? Did you promise that or no?

D O Sir, I am yours; what would you? Yours
am I!

Chs When I have said what I shall say, 't is like
Your face will ne'er again disgust me Go!
Through you, as through a breast of glass, I see.
And for your conduct, from my youth till now,
I take my contempt! You might have spared me
much,

Secured me somewhat, nor so harmed yourself
That's over now. Go, ne'er to come again!

D O As son, the father—father as, the son!
My wits! My wits! [Goes,

Vic [Seated] And you, what meant you, pray,
Speaking thus to D'Ormea?

Chs Let us not
Worry ourselves with D'Ormea! Those few words
Have half unsettled what I came to say
His presence vexes to my very soul

Vic One called to manage a kingdom, Charles, needs
heart

To bear up under worse annoyances
Than seems D'Ormea—to me, at least

Cha [Aside.] Ah, good!
He leads me to the point! Then be it so,

[Aloud] Last night, sir, brought me certain papers—
these—

To be reported on, your way of late.
Is it last night's result that you demand?

Vic. For God's sake, what has night brought forth?
Pronounce

The what's your word?—result!

Cha Sir, that had proved

Quite worthy of your sneer, no doubt — a few

I me thoughts, it, and for you alone could wring,

I me as they are from brains like mine, believe!

As it is, if I am spared both toil and sneer

I'll send the papers

Vic Well, sir? I suppose

You hardly burned them. Now for your result

Cha I never should have done great thing
course,

But oh my father had you loved me more!

Vic I loved? [*Aside*] His D'Ormea played me false
I wonder?

[*Aloud*] Why, Charles, a king's love is diffused—yourself

May overlook, perchance, your part in it.

Our monarchy is absolute now

In Europe, or my trouble's thrown away.

I love, my mode, that subjects crouch and all

May have the power of loving all and each,

Their mode I doubt not, many have then sons

To trifle with, talk soft to, all day long.

I have that crown, this chair, D'Ormea, Charles!

Cha 'Tis well I am a subject then, not you

Vic [*Aside*] D'Ormea has told him everything

[*Aloud*] Aha,

I apprehend you: when all's said, you take

Your private station to be prized beyond
My own, for instance?

Cha. —Do and ever did
So take it: 't is the method you pursue
That grieves

Vic. These words! Let me express, my hand,
Your thoughts. You penetrate what I supposed
Secret. D'Ormea plies his trade betimes!
I purpose to resign my crown to you.

Cha. To me? .

Vic. Now in that chamber.

Cha. You resign
Crown to me?

Vic. And time enough, Charles, sure?
Confess with me, at four-and-sixty years
Crown's a load. I covet quiet once
Before I die, and summoned you for that.

Cha. 'T is I will speak: you ever hated me,
You bore it,—have insulted me, borne too
Now you insult yourself; and I remember
What I believed you, what you really are,
And cannot bear it. What! My life has passed
Under your eye, tormented as you know,—
Your whole sagacities, one after one,
At leisure brought to play on me—to prove me
A fool, I thought and I submitted; now
You'd prove . . . what would you prove me?

Vic. This to me?
I hardly know you!

Cha. Know me? Oh indeed
 You do not! Wait till I complain next time
 Of my simplicity!—for here's a sage
 Knows the world well, is not to be deceived,
 And his experience and his Machiavels,
 D'Ormeas, teach him—what?—that I this while
 Have envied him his crown! He has not smiled,
 I warrant,—has not eaten, drunk nor slept,
 For I was plotting with my Princess yonder!
 Who knows what we might do or might not do?
 Go now, be politic, astound the world!
 That sentry in the antechamber—nay,
 The varlet who disposed this precious trap

[Pointing to the crow]

That was to take me—ask them if they think
 Their own sons envy them their posts!—Know me!

Vic. But you know me, it seems; so, learn in brief,
 My pleasure. This assembly is convened

Cha. Tell me, that woman put it in your head!
 You were not sole contriver of the scheme.
 My father!

Vic. Now observe me, sir! I jest
 Seldom—on these points, never. Here, I say,
 The knights assemble to see me concede,
 And you accept, Sardinia's crown.

Cha. Farewell!
 'T were vain to hope to change this. I can call it
 Not that I cease from being yours, when sunk
 Into obscurity: I'll die for you.

But not annoy you with my presence. Sir,
I farewell! Farewell!

Enter D'ORMEA

D'O [Aside] Ha, sure he's changed again—
Means not to fall into the cunning trap!
Then Victor, I shall yet escape you, Victor!

Vic. [silently placing the crown upon the head of CHARLES]
D'Ormea, your King!

[To CHARLES] My son, obey me! Charles,
Your father, clearer sighted than myself,
Decides it must be so 'Faith, this looks real!
My reasons after, reason upon reason
After but now, obey me! Trust in me!
By this, you save Sardinia, you save me!
Why, the boy swoons! [To D'O] Come this side!

D'O [As CHARLES turns from him to VICTOR.] You
persist?

Vic Yes, I conceive the gesture's meaning 'Faith,
He almost seems to hate you how is that?
Be reassured, my Charles! Is't over now?
Then, Marquis, tell the new King what remains
To do! A moment's work. Del Borgo reads
The Act of Abdication out, you sign it,
Then I sign; after that, come back to me.

D'O Sir, for the last time, pause!

Vic. Five minutes longer

I am your sovereign, Marquis. ~~Hesitate~~
And I'll so turn ~~those~~ minutes to account
That: Ay, you recollect me! [Aside] Could I bring

My foolish mind to undergo the reading
That Act of Abdication !

[*As CHARLES motions D'ORMEA to precede him.*

Thanks, dear Charles !

[*CHARLES and D'ORMEA retire.*

Vic. A novel feature in the boy,—indeed
Just what I feared he wanted most. Quite right,
This earnest tone : your truth, now, for effect !
It answers every purpose : with that look,
That voice,—I hear him : “ I began no treaty,”
(He speaks to Spain,) “ nor ever dreamed of this
“ You show me , this I from my soul regret ;
“ But if my father signed it, bid not me
“ Dishonour him—who gave me all, beside : ”
And, “ true,” says Spain, “ ’t were harsh to visit that
“ Upon the Prince.” Then come the nobles trooping :
“ I grieve at these exactions—I had cut
“ This hand off ere impose them ; but shall I
“ Undo my father’s deed ? ”—and they confer :
“ Doubtless he was no party, after all ;
“ Give the Prince time ! ”

Ay, give us time, but time !

Only, he must not, when the dark day comes,
Refer our friends to me and frustrate all,
We ’ll have no child’s play, no desponding fits,
No Charles at each cross turn entreating Victor
To take his crown again. Guard against that !

Exit D'ORMEA.

Long live King Charles !

No—Charles's counsellor !

Well, is it over, Marquis ? Did I jest ?

D'O. " King Charles ! " What then may you be ?

Vic.

Anything !

A country gentleman that, cured of bustle,
Now beats a quick retreat toward Chambery,
Would hunt and hawk and leave you noisy folk
To dave your trade without him. I'm Count Remont—
Count Tende—any little place's Count !

D'O. Then Victor, Captain against Catinat
At Staffarde, where the French beat you ; and Duke
At Turin, where you beat the French ; King late
Of Savoy, Piedmont, Montferrat, Sardinia,
—Now, " any little place's Count " —

Vic.

Proceed !

D'O. Breaker of vows to God, who crowned you first ;
Breaker of vows to man, who kept you since ;
Most profligate to me who outraged God
And man to serve you, and am made pay crimes
I was but privy to, by passing thus
To your imbecile son—who, well you know,
Must—(when the people here, and nations there,
Clamour for you the main delinquent, slipped
From King to—" Count of any little place ")
Must needs surrender me, all in his reach,—
I, sir, forgive you, for I see the end—
See you on your return—(you will return)—
To him you trust thus for the moment !

Vic.

Trust him ? How ?

My poor man, merely a prime minister,
Make me know where my trust errs !

D'O. In his fear,
His love, his—but discover for yourself
What you are weakest, trusting in !

Vic Aha,
D'Ormea, not a shrewder scheme than this
In your repertory ? You know old Victor—
Van, choleric, inconstant, rash —(I've heard
Talkers who little thought the King so close)
Felicitous now, were I not, to provoke him
To clean forget, one minute afterward,
His solemn act, and call the nobles back
And pray them give again the very power
He has abjured ?— for the dear sake of what ?
Vengeance on you, D'Ormea ! No such am I,
Count Fendle or Count anything you please,
—Only, the same that did the things you say,
And, among other things you say not, used
Your finest fibre, meanest muscle,— you
I used, and now, since you will have it so,
Leave to your fate—mere lumber in the midst,
You and your works Why, what on earth beside
Are you made for, you sort of ministers ?

D'O. Not left, though, to my fate ! Your witless
son
Has more wit than to load himself with lumber :
He foils you that way, and I follow you.

Vic. Stay with my son—protect the weaker side !

D'O. Ay, to be tossed the people like a rag,
And flung by them for Spain and Austria's sport,
Abolishing the record of your part
In all this perfidy !

Vic. Prevent, beside
My own return !

D'O. That 's half prevented now !
'I will go hard but you find a wondrous charm
In exile, to discredit me. The Alps,
Silk mills to watch, vines asking vigilance—
Hounds open for the stag, you hawk 's a-wing—
Brave days that wait the Louis of the South,
Italy's Janus !

Vic. So, the lawyer's clerk
Won't tell me that I shall repent !

D'O. You give me
I'll leave to ask if you repent ?

V. Whence
Sufficient time elapse for that, you judge !

[Shouts inside 'KING CHARLES']

D'O. Do you repent ?

Vic. [after a slight pause] . . . I've kept them waiting ?

• Yes !

Come in, complete the Abdication, sir ! [They go out.]

Enter POISSONNA.

Pol. A shout ! The sycophants are free of Charles !
O is not the like Italy ? No fruit
Of his or my distempered fancy, this,
But just an ordinary fact ! Beside,

Here they 've set forms for such proceedings , Victor
 Imprisoned his own mother : he should know,
 If any, how a son 's to be deprived
 Of a son's right. Our duty 's palpable.
 Ne'er was my husband for the wily king
 And the unworthy subjects . be it so !
 Come you safe out of them, my Charles ! Our life
 Grows not the broad and dazzling life, I dreamed
 Might prove your lot , for strength was shut in you
 None guessed but I—strength which, untrammelled once,
 Had little shamed your vaunted ancestry—
 Patience and self devotion, fortitude,
 Simplicity and utter truthfulness
 —All which, they shout to lose !

So, now my work

Begins—to save him from regret. Save Charles
 Regret?—the noble nature ! He 's not made
 Like these Italians —t is a German soul.

(CHARLES enters crowned.

Oh, where's the King's heir ? Gone !—the Crown
 prince? Gone —

Where 's Savoy ? Gone .—Sardinia ? Gone ! But
 Charles

Is left ! And when my Rhine-land brewers arrive,
 If he looked almost handsome yester-twilight
 As his grey eyes seemed widening into black
 Because I praised him, then how will he look ?
 Farewell, you stripped and whited mulberry-trees
 Bound each to each by lazy ropes of vine !

Now I'll teach you my language; I'm not forced
To speak Italian now, Charles?

[*She sees the crown*] What is this?

Answer me—who has done this? Answer!

Va

He!

I am King now,

Pol Oh worst, worst, worst of all!

Tell me! What, Victor? He has made you King?

What? he then? What's to follow this? You, King?

Pol Have I done wrong? Yes, for you were not by!

Pol Tell me from first to last

Cha

Hush—a new world

Brightens before me, he is moved away

—The dark form that eclipsed it, he subsides

Into a shape supporting me like you,

And I, alone, tend upward, more and more

Tend upward: I am grown Sardinia's King.

Pol Now stop—was not this Victor, Duke of Savoy
At ten years old?

Cha

He was.

Pol

And the Duke spent

Since then, just four-and-fifty years in toil

To be what?

Cha.

King.

Pol.

Then why unking himself?

Cha Those years are cause enough.

Pol.

The only cause?

Cha. Some new perplexities.

Pol!

Which you can solve

Although he cannot ?

Cha. He assures me so

Pol. And this he means shall last—how long ?

Cha. How long ?

Think you I fear the perils I confront ?

He 's praising me before the people's face—

My people !

Pol. Then he 's changed—grown kind, the king ?
Where can the trap be ?

Cha. Heart and soul I pledged
My father, could I grieve the crown you gained,
Transmit as I received it,—all good else
Would I surrender !

Pol. Ah, it opens then
Before you, all you dreaded formerly ?
You are rejoiced to be a king, my Charles ?

Cha. So much to dare ? The better,—much to dread ?
The better. I 'll adventure though alone.
Triumph or die, there 's Victor still to witness
Who dies or triumphs—either way, alone !

Pol. Once I had found my share in triumph, Charles,
Or death.

Cha. But you are I ! But you I call
To take, Heaven's proxy, vows I tendered Heaven
A moment since. I will deserve the crown !

Pol. You will. [*Aside*] No doubt it were a glorious
thing
For any people, if a heart like his,
Ruled over it. I would I saw the traitor.

Enter VICTOR.

'T is he must show me.

Vic.

So, the mask falls off
An old man's foolish love at last. Spare thanks!
I know you, and Polixena I know.

Here's Charles—I am his guest now—does he bid me
Be seated? And my light-haired blue-eyed child
Must not forget the old man far away
At Chambery, who dozes while she reigns.

Pol. Most grateful shall we now be, talking least
Of gratitude—indeed of anything
That hinders what yourself must need to say
To Charles.

Cha: Pray speak, sir!

Vic.

'Faith, not much to say:
Only what shows itself, you once i' the point
Of sight. You're now the King: you'll comprehend
Much you may oft have wondered at—the shifts,
Dissimulation, wiliness I showed.
For what our post? Here's Savoy and here's
Piedmont,

Here's Montferrat—a breadth here, a space there—
To o'er-sweep all these, what's one weapon worth?
I often think of how they fought in Greece
(Or Rome, which was it? You're the scholar, Charles!)
You made a front-thrust? But if your shield too
Were not adroitly planted, some shrewd knave
Reached you behind; and him foiled, straight if thong
And handle of that shield were not cast loose,

And you enabled to outstrip the wind,
 Fresh foes assailed you, either side : 'scape these,
 And reach your place of refuge—e'en then, odds
 If the gate opened unless breath enough
 Were left in you to make its lord a speech
 Oh, you will see !

Cha. No : straight on shall I go,
 Truth helping ; win with it or die without.

Vic. 'Faith, Charles, you're not made Europe's
 fighting-man !

The barrier-guarder, if you please. You clutch
 Hold and consolidate, with envious France
 This side, with Austria that, the territory
 I held—ay, and will hold . . . which you shall hold
 Despite the couple ! But I've surely earned
 Exemption from these weary politics,
 —The privilege to prattle with my son

And daughter here, tho' Europe wait the while

Poi. Nay, sir,—at Chambery, away for ever,
 As soon you will be, 't is farewell we bid you
 Turn these few fleeting moments to account !
 'T is just as though it were a death

Vic.

Indeed !

Poi. [*Aside.*] Is the trap there ?

Cha.

Ay, call this prating—death !

The sacredder your memory becomes

If I misrule Sardinia, how bring back

My father ?

Poi.

I mean

Pol. [*who watches Victor narrowly this while.*]

• • • Your father does not mean
You should be suing for your father's sake :
It is your people must concern you wholly
Instead of him. You mean this, sir? (He drops
My hand !)

Cha That people is now part of me.

Vic About the people ! I took certain measures
Some short time since . . Oh, I know well, you know
But little of my measures ! These affect
The nobles ; we've resumed some grants, imposed
A tax or two ; prepare yourself, in short,
For clamour on that score Mark me you yield
No job of aught entrusted you !

Pol. No job

You yield !

Cha. My father, when I took the oath,
Although my eye might stray in search of yours,
I heard and understood it, promised God
What you require. Till from this eminence
He move me, here I keep, nor shall concede
The meanest of my rights.

Vic [*Aside.*] The boy's a fool !

—(Or rather, I'm a fool : for, what's wrong here ?
To day the sweets of reigning let to morrow
Be ready with its bitterness.

Enter D'ORMFA.

There's beside

Somewhat to press upon your notice first

Cha. Then why delay it for an instant, sir?
That Spanish claim perchance? And, now you speak,
—This morning, my opinion was mature,
Which, boy like, I was bashful in producing
To one I ne'er am like to fear in future!
My thought is formed upon that Spanish claim

Vic Betimes indeed Not now, Charles! You require
A host of papers on it

D'O. [*coming forward*] Here they are.
[*To CHA*] I was the minister and much beside
Of the late monarch, to say little, him
I served on you I have, to say e'en less,
No claim This case contains those papers: with them
I tender you my office

Vic [*hastily*] Keep him, Charles!
There's reason for it—many reasons: you
Distrust him, nor are so far wrong there,—but
He's mixed up in this matter—he'll desire
To quit you, for occasion, known to me:
Do not accept those reasons have him stay!

Pol [*Aside*] His minister thrust on us!

Cha. [*to D'ORMEA*] Sit, believe,
In justice to myself, you do not need.
E'en this commending howso'er might seem
My feelings toward you, as a private man,
They quit me in the vast and untrod field
Of action. Though I shall myself yet late
In your own hearing I engaged to do
Preside o'er my Sardina, yet your hon

Is necessary. Think the past forgotten
And serve me now!

D'O I did not offer you
My service—would that I could serve you, sir!
As for the Spanish matter . . .

Vic. But dispatch
At least the dead, in my good daughter's phrase,
Before the living! Help to house me safe
Ere with D'Ormea you set the world a gape!
Here is a paper—will you overlook
What I propose reserving for my needs?
I get as far from you as possible
Here's what I reckon my expenditure

Cha [*reading*] A miserable fifty thousand crowns!

Vic. Oh quite enough for country gentlemen!
Beside the exchequer happens . . . but find out
All that, yourself!

Cha. [*still reading*] "Count Tende"—what means
this?

Vic. Me. you were but an infant when I burst
Through the defile of Tende upon France
Had only my allies kept true to me!
No matter. Tende's, then, a name I take
Just as . . .

D'O. The Marchioness Sebastian takes
The name of Spagno.

Cha. How, sir?

Vic [*to D'Ormea*] Fool! All that
Was for my own detailing. [*To CHARLES*] That anon!

Cha. [to D'ORMEA.] Explain what you have said, sir !
D'O. I supposed

The marriage of the King to her I named,
 Profoundly kept a secret these few weeks,
 Was not to be one, now he's Count.

Pol. [Aside] With us
 The minister—with him the mistress !

Cha. [to VICTOR] No—
 Tell me you have not taken her—that woman
 To live with, past recall !

Vic. And where's the crime .

Pol. [to CHARLES] True, sir, this is a matter past
 recall

And past your cognizance A day before,
 And you had been compelled to note this—now
 Why note it ? The King saved his House from
 shame

What the Count did, is no concern of yours.

Cha. [after a pause] The Spanish claim, D'Ormea !

Vic. Why, my son,
 I took some ill advised . . . one's age, in fact,
 Spools everything though I was over-reached,
 A younger brain, we'll trust, may extricate
 Sardinia readily. To morrow, D'Ormea,
 Inform the King !

D'O. [without regarding VICTOR, and latently.]

Thus stands the case with Spain :
 When first the Infant Carlos claimed his proper
 succession to the throne of Tuscany.

Vic I tell you that stands over ! Let that rest !
There is the policy !

Cha [to D'ORMEA.] Thus much I know,
And more—too much : the remedy ?

D O

Of course !

No glimpse of one.

I've

No remedy at all !

It makes the remedy itself—time makes it.

D O [to CHARLES.] But if . . .

Vic [still more hastily] In fine, I shall take care of
that ;

And, with another project that I have . . .

D O [turning on him] Oh, since Count Tende means
to take again

King Victor's crown !—

Pol. [throwing herself at VICTOR'S feet.] E'en now
retake it, sir !

Oh, speak ! We are your subjects both, once
more !

Say it—a word effects it ! You meant not,
Nor do mean now, to take it : but you must !
'T is in you—in your nature—and the shame's
Not half the shame 't would grow to afterwards !

Cha. Polyxena !

Pol. A word recalls the knights—

Say it !—What's promising and what 's the past ?

Say you are still King Victor !

D O.

Better say

The Count repents, in brief !

[VICTOR rises.]

Cha. With such a crime
I have not charged you, sir !
Pol. Charles turns from me !

SECOND YEAR, 1731 — KING CHARLES

PART I.

FAME QUEEN POLIXINA and D'ORMEA. — A pause

Pol. And now, sir, what have you to say ?

D'O. Count 'Tendre

Pol. Affirm not I betrayed you, you resolve
On uttering this strange intelligence
—Nay, post yourself to find me ere I reach
The capital, because you know King Charles
Tarnies a day or two at Erian baths
Behind me —but take warning,—here and thus
[*Seating herself in the royal seat*]

I listen, if I listen—not your friend.
Explicitly the statement, if you still
Persist to urge it on me, must proceed :
I am not made for aught else.

D'O. Good ! Count Tendre . . .

Pol. I, who mistrust you, shall acquaint King Charles
Who even more mistrusts you.

D'O. Does he so ?

Pol. Why should he not ?

D'O. Ay, why not ? Motives, seek
You virtuous people, motives ! Say, I serve

God at the devil's bidding—will that do ?
 I 'm proud : our people have been pacified,
 Really I know not how—

Pol. By truthfulness.

D O. Exactly ; that shows I had nought to do
 With pacifying them. Our foreign perils
 Also exceed my means to stay : but here
 'T is otherwise, and my pride 's piqued. Count Tende
 Completes a full year's absence would you, madam,
 Have the old monarch back, his mistress back,
 His measures back ? I pray you, act upon
 My counsel, or they will be.

Pol. When ?

D O. Let 's think.

Home matters settled—Victor 's coming now ;
 Let foreign matters settle—Victor 's here
 Unless I stop him ; as I will, this way.

Pol. [*reading the papers he presents.*] If this should
 prove a plot 'twixt you and Victor ?
 You seek annoyances to give pretext
 For what you say you fear !

D O. Oh, possibly !
 I go for nothing. Only show King Charles
 That thus Count Tende purposes return,
 And style me his inviter, if you please !

Pol. Half of your tale is true ; most like, the Count
 Seeks to return ; but why stay you with us ?
 To aid in such emergencies.

D O. Keep safe

Those papers : 'or, to serve me, leave no proof
 I thus have counselled ! when the Count returns,
 And the King abdicates, 't will stead me little
 To have thus counselled.

Pol. The King abdicate !

D'O. He 's good, we knew long since—wise, we discover—

Firm, let us hope :- —but I 'd have gone to work
 With him away. Well !

[*CHARLES without*] In the Council Chamber ?

D'O. All 's lost !

Pol. Oh, surely not King Charles ! He 's changed—
 That 's not this year's care burthened voice and step :
 'T is last year's step, the Prince's voice !

D'O. I know.

[*Enter CHARLES —D'ORMLA stirring a little.*]

Cha. Now wish me joy, Polyxena ! Wish 't me
 The old way ! [She embraces him.]

There was too much cause for that !

But I have found myself again. What news
 At Turin ? Oh, if you but felt the load,
 I 'm free of—free ! I said this year would end
 Or it, or me—but I am free, thank God !

Pol. How, Charles ?

Cha. You do not guess ? The day I found
 Sardinia's hideous coil, at home, abroad,
 And how my father was involved in it,
 Of course, I vowed to rest and smile no more
 Until I cleared his name from obloquy.

We did the people right—'t was much to gain
 'That point, redress our nobles' grievance, too—
 But that took place here, was no crying shame :
 All must be done abroad, - if I abroad
 Appeased the justly-angered Powers, destroyed
 The scandal, took down Victor's name at last
 From a bad eminence, I then might breathe
 And rest ! No moment was to lose. Behold
 The proud result—a Treaty, Austria, Spain
 Agree to—

D'O. [*Aside.*] I shall merely stipulate
 For an experienced headsman.

Cha. Not a soul
 Is compromised : the blotted past 's a blank :
 Even D'Ormea escapes unquestioned. See !
 It reached me from Vienna ; I remained
 At Evian to dispatch the Count his news ;
 'T is gone to Chambéry a week ago—
 And here am I : do I deserve to feel
 Your warm white arms around me ?

D'O. [*Coming forward.*] He knows that ?

Cha. What, in Heaven's name, means this ?

D'O. He knows that matters
 Are settled at Vienna ? Not too late !
 Plainly, unless you post this very hour
 Some man you trust (say, me) to Chambéry
 And take precautions I acquaint you with,
 Your father will return here.

Cha.

Are you crazed ?

D'Ormea? Here? For what? As well return
To take his crown!

D'O. He will return for that.

Cha. [to POLYXENA] You have not listened to this man?

Pol. He spoke

About your safety—and I listened.

[He disengages himself from his arms

Cha [to D'ORMEA] What
Apprised you of the Count's intentions?

D'O. Me? •

His heart, sir, you may not be used to read
Such evidence however, therefore read

[Pointing to POLYXENA's papers.

My evidence.

Cha. [to POLYXENA] Oh, worthy this of you!
And of your speech I never have forgotten,
Though I professed forgetfulness, which haunts me
As if I did not know how false it was;
Which made me toil unconsciously thus long
That there might be no least occasion left,
For aught of its prediction coming true!
And now, when there is left no least occasion
To instigate my father to such crime—
When I might venture to forget (I hoped)
That speech and recognize Polyxena—
Oh worthy, to revive, and tenfold worse,
That plague! D'Ormea at your ear, his slanders
Still in your hand! Silent?

Pol. As the wronged are.

Cha. And you, D'Ormea, since when have you presumed

To spy upon my father? I conceive
What that wise paper shows, and easily.
Since when?

D'O. The when and where and how belong
To me. 'T is sad work, but I deal in such.
You oftentimes serve yourself, I'd serve you here:
Use makes me not so squeamish. In a word,
Since the first hour he went to Chumbery,
Of his seven servants, five have I suborned.

Cha. You hate my father?

D'O. Oh, just as you will!

[*Looking at POLYXENA.*]

A minute since, I loved him—hate him, now!
What matter?—if you ponder just one thing:
Has he that treaty?—he is setting forward
Already. Are your guards here?

Cha. Well for you

They are not! [*To POL.*] Him I knew of old, but you—
To hear that pickthank, further his designs! [*To D'O.*]
Guards?—were they here, I'd bid them, for your trouble,
Arrest you.

D'O. Guards you shall not want. I lived
The servant of your choice, not of your need.
You never greatly needed me till now
That you disregard me. This is my arrest.
Again I tender you my charge—its duty

Would bid me press you read those documents.

Here, sir!

[Offering *h's* badge of office.

Cha. [taking it.] The papers also! Do you think I dare not read them?

Pol.

Read them, sir!

Cha.

They prove,

My father, still a month within the year

Since he so solemnly consigned it me,

Means to resume his crown? They shall prove that,

Or my best dungeon . . .

D'O

Even say, Chambery

'T is vacant, I surmise, by this.

Cha.

You prove

Your words or pay their forfeit, sir Go there!

Polyxena, one chance to rend the veil

Thickening and blackening 'twixt us two! Do say,

You'll see the falsehood of the charges proved!

Do say, at least, you wish to see them proved

False charges—my heart's love of other times!

Pol. Ah, Charles!

Cha. [to D'ORME A.] Precede me, sir!

D'O.

And I'm at length

A martyr for the truth! No end, they say,

Of miracles. My conscious innocence!

[As they go out, enter—by the *middle door*, at which he
pauses—VICTOR.]

Vic. Sure I heard voices? No, ~~well~~, I do best
 To make at once for this, the heart of the place.
 The old room! Nothing changed! So near my seat,

D'Ormea? [*Pushing away the stool which is by the
King's chair.*]

I want that meeting over first,
I know not why. Tush, he, D'Ormea, slow
To hearten me, the supple knave? That burst
Of spite so eased him! He'll inform me . . .

What?

Why come I hither? All 's in rough: let all
Remain rough. There 's full time to draw back—nay,
There's nought to draw back from, as yet; whereas,
If reason should be, to arrest a course
Of error—reason good, to interpose
And save, as I have saved so many times,
Our House, admonish my son's giddy youth,
Relieve him of a weight that proves too much—
Now is the time,—or now, or never.

'Faith,

This kind of step is pitiful, not due
To Charles, this stealing back—hither, because
He 's from his capital! Oh Victor! Victor!
But thus it is. The age of crafty men
Is loathsome; youth contrives to carry off
Disimulation; we may intersperse
Extenuating passages of strength,
Ardour, vivacity, and wit—may turn
E'en guile into a voluntary grace: .
But one's old age, when graces drop away
And leave guile the pure staple of our lives—
Ah, loathsome!

Not so—or why pause I? Turin
 Is mine to have, were I so minded, for
 The asking; all the army's mine—I've witnessed
 Each private fight beneath me; all the Court's
 Mine too; and, best of all, D'Ormea's still
 D'Ormea and mine. There's some grace clinging yet.
 Had I decided on this step, ere midnight
 I'd take the crown.

No. Just this step to rise
 Exhausts me. Here am I arrived: the rest
 Must be done for me. Would I could sit here
 And let things right themselves, the masque unmarque
 Of the old King, crownless, grey hair and hot blood,—
 The young King, crowned, but calm before his time.
 They say,—the eager mistress with her taunts,—
 And the sad earnest wife who motions me
 Away—ay, there she knelt to me! E'en yet
 I can return and sleep at Chambery
 A dream out.

Rather shake it off at Turin,
 King Victor! Say: to Turin—yes, or no?

'Tis this relentless noonday lighted chamber,
 Lighted like life but silent as the grave,
 That disconcerts me. That's the change that must strike.
 No silence last year! Some one flung doors wide
 (Those two great doors which scrutinize me now)
 And out I went 'mid crowds of men—men talking,
 Men watching if my lip fell or brow knit,
 Men saw me safe forth, put me on my road:

That makes the misery of this return.
 Oh had a battle done it! Had I dropped,
 Had long some battle, three entire days old,
 Hither and thither by the forehead—dropped
 In Spain, in Austria, best of all, in France—
 Spurned on its horns or underneath its hooves,
 When the spent monster went upon its knees
 To pull and push the prostrate wretch—I, Victor,
 Sole to have stood up against France, beat down
 By inches, braved by pieces finally
 In some vast unimagined charge.
 A fly in, hell of horse and foot and guns
 Over me, and all 's lost, for ever lost,
 There 's no more Victor when the world wakes up!
 Then silence, as of a raw battle field,
 Throughout the world. Then after (as whole days
 After, you catch at intervals faint noise
 Through the stiff crust of frozen blood) there creeps
 A rumour forth, so faint, no noise at all,
 That a strange old man, with face outworn for wounds,
 Is stumping on from frontier town to town,
 Begging a pittance that may help him find
 His 'Turn out; what scorn and laughter follow
 The coin you fling into his cap! And last,
 Some bright morn, how men crowd about the midst
 Of the market-place, where takes the old king breath
 Ere with his ~~crutch~~ he strike the palace-gate
 Wide ope!

To Tuxin, yes or no—or no?

[He enters CHARLES with papers.]

Cha Just as I thought! A miserable falsehood
Of hirelings discontented with their pay
And longing for enfranchisement! A few
Testy expressions of old age that thinks
To keep alive its dignity over slaves
By means that suit their natures!

[Iaring them.] Thus they shake
My faith in Victor!

[Turning, he discovers VICTOR.]

Vic *[after a pause.]* Not at Evian, Charles?
What's this? Why do you run to close the doors?
No welcome for your father?

Cha *[aside.]* Not his voice!
What would I give for one imperious tone
Of the old sort! That's gone for ever.

Vic Must
I ask once more

Cha No I concede it, sir!
You are returned for . . . true your health declines,
True, Chambéry's a black unkindly spot,
You'd choose one fitter for your final lodge—
Veneria, or Montglieu, that's close
And I concede it.

Vic. I received advices
Of the conclusion of the Spanish matter,
Dated from Evian Baths.

Cha. And you forbore
To visit me at Evian, satisfied

The work I had to do would fully task
The little wit I have, and that your presence
Would only disconcert me—

I u.

Charles?

Ch.

— Me, set

I or eve in a foreign course to yours,
And

Sir, the way of wil' were good to catch,
But I have not the sleight of it The truth!
I though I sink under it! What brings you here?

I u. Not hope of this reception, certainly,
From one who 'd scarce assume a stranger mode
Of speech, did I return to bring about
Some awfulest calamity!

Ch.

— You mean,

Did you require your crown again! Oh yes,
I should speak otherwise! But turn not that
To jesting! Su, the truth! Your health declines?
Is might deficient in your equipage?
Wisely you seek myself to make complaint,
And to the malice of the world which laughs
At petty discontents, but I shall care
That not a soul knows of this visit Speak!

I u. [*Aside.*] Here is the grateful much professing

son

Prepared to worship me, for whose sake
I think to waive my plans of public good!

[*Aloud.*] Nay, Charles, if I did seek to take once more
My crown, were so disposed to plague myself,

What would be warrant for this bitterness ?

I gave it—grant I would resume it—well ?

Cha. I should say simply—leaving out the why
And how—you made me swear to keep that crown
And as you then intended . . .

Vic. Fool ! What was
Could I intend or not intend ? As man,
With a man's will, when I say "I intend,"
I can intend up to a certain point,
No further—I intended to preserve
The crown of Savoy and Sardinia whole :
And if events arise demonstrating
The way, I hoped should guard it, rather like
To lose it . . .

Cha Keep within your sphere and mine '
It is God's province we usurp on, else.
Here, blindfold through the maze of things we walk
By a slight clue of false, true, right and wrong ;
All else is rambling and presumption. I
Have sworn to keep this kingdom : there 's my truth

Vic Truth, boy, is here, within my breast ; and in
Your recognition of it, truth is, too ;
And in the effect of all this tortuous dealing
With falsehood, used to carry out the truth,
—In its success, this falsehood turns, again,
Truth for the world ' But you are right : these themes
Are over-subtle. I should rather say
In such a case, frankly,—it fails, my scheme :
I hoped to see you bring about, yourself,

What I must bring about. I interpose
 On your behalf—with my son's good in sight—
 To hold what he is nearly letting go,
 To confirm his title, add a grace perhaps
 There's Sicily, for instance,—granted me
 And taken back, some years since till I give
 That island with the rest, my work's half done
 For his sake, therefore, as of the other rules

Charles. But takes are one, and that you could not say,
 Because my answer would present itself
 Forthwith—a year has wrought an ages change
 This people's not the people now you once
 Could benefit; nor is my policy
 Your policy.

Victor [with an outburst]. I know it! You undo
 All I have done—my life of toil and care!
 I left you this the absolutest rule
 In Europe: do you think I will sit still
 And see you throw power to the populace—
 See my Sardinia, that has stood apart,
 Join in the mad and democratic whirl
 Whereto I see all Europe haste full tilt?
 England casts off her kings, France mimics England:
 This realm I hoped was safe. Yet here I talk,
 When I can save it, not by force alone,
 But bidding plagues, which follow sons like you,
 Fasten upon my disobedient . . .

[Recollecting himself.] Surely
 I could say this—~~it might~~ so—my son?

Cha. You could not Bitterer curses than your curse
 Have I long since denounced upon myself
 If I misused my power. In fear of these
 I entered on those measures—will abide
 By them so I should say, Count Tende . . .

Vic

No !

But no ! But if, my Charles, your more than old -
 Half foolish father urged the arguments,
 And then confessed them futile, but said plumply
 That he forgot his promise, found his strength
 Fail him, had thought it wiser Chambery
 Too much of brilliant Turin I vol here,
 And Susa, and Venice, and Superga—
 Pined for the pleasant place he had built
 When he was fortunate and young,—

Cha

My father !

Vic Stay yet !—and if he said he could not die
 Deprived of baubles he had put aside,
 He declined, for ever—of the Crown that binds
 Your brain up whole, sound and impregnable,
 Creating kingliness the Sceptic too,
 Whose mere wind, should you wave it, back would beat
 Invaders—and the golden Bull which throbs
 As if you grasped the pulsating heart,
 Indeed o' the realm, to mould as you may choose !
 —If I must totter up and down the stream
 My sire's built, where myself have introduced
 And fostered laws and letters, sciences
 The civil and the military arts

Stay, Charles! I see you letting me pretend
 To live my former self once more—King Victor,
 The venturous yet politic, they style me
 Again the Father of the Prince. friends wink
 Good humouredly at the demision you
 So sedulously guard from all roth truths
 But else would break upon my dotage! You
 Whom now I see preventing my old hune—
 I will not, point by cruel point, my tale—
 For I trust in your breast my liow is hid?
 Is not your hand extended? Say you not

[Enter D'ORMEA / / / in DISGUISE]

Pol [advancing and exultant]—to CHARLES—to VICTOR]

In this conjuncture even, he would say
 (Though with a moisten'd eye and quivering lip)
 The suppliant is my father—I must save
 A great man from himself, nor see him fling
 His well-earned fame away—there must not follow
 Ruin so utter, a break down of worth
 So absolute; no enemy shall learn,
 He thrust his child 'twixt danger and himself,
 And, when that child somehow stood danger out,
 Stole back with serpent wiles to ruin Charles
 —Body, that's much,—and soul, that's more—and calm,
 That's most of all! No enemy shall say . . .

D O. Do you repent, su?

Vic. [retracing himself] D'Ormea? This is well!
 Worthily done, King Charles, craftily done!
 Judiciously you rest these, to o'erhear

The little your unfortunate father thrust,
 Himself on you to say '—Ah, they 'll correct
 The amiable blind facility
 You show in answering his peevish suit
 What can he need to sue for? Bravely, D'Ormeau
 Have you fulfilled your office but for you,
 The old Count might have drawn some few more lines,
 To swell his income! Had you, lady, missed
 The moment a permission would be granted
 To buttress up my ruinous old pile!
 But you remember properly the list
 Of wise precautions I took when I gave
 Nearly as much away to reap the fruits
 I might have looked for!

Cha Thanks, sir: degradable inc
 So you remain yourself! Adieu!

Vic I'll not
 Forget it for the future, nor presume
 Next time to slight such mediators! Nay—
 Had I first moved them both to intercede,
 I might secure a chamber in Moncaglier
 —Who knows?

Cha Adieu!

Vic You bid me this adieu
 With the old spirit?

Cha. Adieu!

Vic.

Charles — *Charles*!

Cha.

Adieu!

VICTOR ROSE

Cha You were mistaken, Marquis, as you hear!
 'T was for another purpose the Count came.
 The Count desires Montcaglior Give the order!
D'O [*leisurely*] Your minister has lost your confidence,
 Asserting late, for his own purposes,
 Count Tende would .

Cha [*flinging his lads, &c. out*] Be still the minister!
 And give a loose to your insulminating joy,
 Attacks me more than stilled than expressed
 Loose!

D'O There's none to loose, it is I—I see
 I never aim to die a martyr.

Pol. Charles!

Chu No praise, at least, Polycron! no pruse!

— — —

KING CHARLES PART II

D'ORMEA seated, folding his arms, and examining.

This at the last effects it now King Charles
 Or else King Victor—that's a balance—but now,
 D'Ormea the arch-culprit, either turn
 O' the scale,—that's sure enough A point to solve,
 My masters, moralists, whatever your style!
 When you discover why I push myself
 Into a pitfall you'd pass safely by,
 Impart to me, among the rest! No matter.
 Prompt are the righteous ever with their rede
 To us the wrongful, lesson them this once!

For safe among the wicked are you set,
 D'Ormea! We lament life's brevity,
 Yet quarter e'en the threescore years and ten,
 Nor stick to call the quarter roundly "life,"
 D'Ormea was wicked. say, some twenty years;
 A tree so long was stunted; afterward,
 What if it grew, continued growing, till
 No fellow of the forest equalled it?
 'T was a stump then, a stump it still must be;
 While forward saplings, at the outset checked,
 In virtue of that first sprout keep their style
 Amid the forest's green fraternity.
 Thus I shoot up to surely get lopped down
 And bound up for the burning. Now for it!

Enter CHARLES and LOUISA with Attendants.

D'O. [*rises.*] Sir, in the due discharge of this my office—

This enforced summons of yourself from Turin,
 And the disclosure I am bound to make
 To-night,— there must already be, I feel,
 So much that wounds . . .

Cha.

Well, sir?

D'O.

—That I, perchance,

May utter also what, another time,
 Would irk much,—it may prove less irksome now.

Cha. What would you utter?

D'O.

That I ~~lose~~ my soul

Grieve at to-night's event: for you I grieve

E'en grieve for .

Chu. Tush, another time for talk !
My kingdom is in imminent danger ?

D'O. Let
The Count communicate with France—its king,
His grandson, will have Fleury's aid for this,
Though for no other war

Chu. First for the levies
What forces can I muster presently ?

[*He looks at his papers.* *He checks himself in pain.*]

Chu. Good—very good Montorio how is this ?
—Equips me double the old complement
Of soldiers ?

D'O. Since his land has been relieved
From double imposts, thus he manages
But under the late monarch .

Chu. Peace ! I know.
Count Spava has omitted mentioning
What proxy is to head these troops of his

D'O. Count Spava means to head his troops himself.
Something to fight for now , “Whereas,” says he,
‘ Under the sovereign’s father ’ . .

Chu. It would seem
That all my people love me.

D'O. Yes.

[*To Polixena while CHARLES continues to inspect the papers.*]

A temper

Like Victor's may avail to keep a state ;
He terrifies men and they fall not off ;
Good to restrain ! best, if restraint were all.

But, with the silent circle round him, ends
 Such sway: our King's begins precisely there.
 For to suggest, impel and set at work,
 Is quite another function. Men may slight,
 In time of peace, the King who brought them peace.
 In war,—his voice, his eyes, help more than fear.
 They love you, sir!

Cha. [*to Attendants*] Bring the regalia forth!
 Quit the room! And now, Muquis, answer me!
 Why should the King of France invade my realm?

D'O. Why? Did I not recount your Majesty
 An hour ago?

Cha. I choose to hear again
 What then I heard

D'O. Because sir, as I said,
 Your father is resolved to have his crown
 At any risk; and, as I judge, calls in
 The foreigner to aid him.

Chu. And your reason
 For saying this?

D'O. [*Aside*] Ay, just his father's way!
 [*To CH.*] The Count wrote yesterday to your force's
 Chief,

Rhebinder—made demand of help—

Cha. To try
 Rhebinder—he's of alien blood: aught else?

D'O. Receiving a refusal,—some hours after
 The Count called on Del Borgo to deliver
 The Act of Abdication: he refusing,

While here's a method of remonstrance—sure
 Not stronger than the case demands—to take
 With the Count's self.

Cha. Deliver those three papers.

Pol. [*while CHARLES inputs them—to D'ORMIA.*]

Your measures are not over harsh, sir: France
 Will hardly be deterred from her intents
 By these.

D'O. If who proposes might dispose,
 I could soon satisfy you—Even these,
 Hear what he'll say at my presenting!

Cha. [*who has signed them*] There!
 About the warrants! You've my signature.
 What turns you pale? I do my duty by you
 In acting boldly thus on your advice.

D'O. [*reading them separately.*] Arrest the people I
 suspected merely?

Cha. Did you suspect them?

D'O. Doubtless: but—but—sir,
 This Forquien's governor of Lun,
 And Rivarol and he have influence over
 Half of the capital! Rabell, too?
 Why, sir—

Cha. Oh, leave the fear to me!

D'O. [*still reading*] You bid me
 Incarcerate the people on this list?
 Sir—

Cha. But you never bade arrest those men,
 So close related to my father too,

On trifling grounds?

D'O.

Oh, as for that, St. George,
President of Chambery's senators,
Is hatching treason! still—

[*More troubled.*] Sir, Count Cumiane
Is brother to your father's wife! What's here?
Arrest the wife herself?

Cha.

You seem to think
A venial crime this plot against me. Well?

D'O. [*who has read the last paper.*] Wherefore am I

thus ruined? Why not take
My life at once? 'This poor formality
Is, let me say, unworthy you! Prevent it
You, madam! I have served you, am prepared
For all disgraces: only, let disgrace
Be plain, be proper—proper for the world
To pass its judgment on 'twixt you and me!
'Take back your warrant, I will none of it!

Cha. Here is a man to talk of fickleness!

He stakes his life upon my father's falsehood;
I bid him . . .

D'O.

Not you! Were he trebly false,
You do not bid me . . .

Cha.

Is 't not written there?
I thought so; give—I'll set it right.

D'O.

'Is it there?
(Oh yes, and plain—arrest him now—drag here
Your father, and were all six times as plain,
Do you suppose I trust it?

Cha. Just one word !
 You bring him, taken in the act of flight,
 Or else your life is forfeit.

D'O. Ay, to Turin
 I bring him, and to-morrow ?

Cha. Here and now !
 The whole thing is a lie, a hateful lie,
 As I believed and as my father said
 I knew it from the first but was compelled
 To circumvent you and the great D'Ormea,
 That baffled Alberoni and tricked Coscia,
 The miserable sower of such discord
 'Twixt sire and son, is in the toils at last.
 Oh I see ! you arrive this plan of yours. "
 Weak as it is, torments sufficiently
 A sick old peevish man with his hasty speech,
 An ill-considered threat from him, that's noted :
 Then out you fetch papers, his amusement
 In lonely hours of lassitude examine
 The day by day report of your judicious spies—
 And back you come all was not true, you find,
 And, as you hope, may keep from ripening yet,
 But you were in time ! Only, 't were best
 I never saw my father these old men
 Are potent in excuses and meanwhile,
 D'Ormea's the man I cannot do without !

Pol. Charles—

Cha. Ah, no question ! You against me too
 You'd have me eat and drink and sleep, live, die

With this he coiled about me, choking me !
 No no, D'Ormea ! You venture life, you say,
 Upon my father's perfidy . and I
 Have, on the whole, no right to disregard
 The chains of testimony you thus wind
 About me , though I do do from my soul
 Discredit them . still I must authorize
 These measure , and I will Perugin !

[*Many Officers enter*] Count-

You and Sir, with all the force you have,
 Stand to the Marquis orders what he bids,
 Implicitly perform ! You are to bring
 A traitor here, the man that's likest one
 At present, fronts me , you are it is back
 For a full hour ! he undertakes to show
 A fouler than himself, - but I know that,
 Return with him, and, as my father lives,
 He dies this night ! The clemency you blune
 So oft shall be revoked—rights exercised,
 Too long abjured.

[*To D'ORMEA*] Now sir, about the work !
 To save your king and country ! Take the warrant
 [*He*] You hear the sovereign's mandate, Count Perugin !
 Obey me ! As your diligence expect
 Reward ! All follow to Montargier !

Cha [*in great anguish*] D'Ormea ! • [*D'ORMEA goes.*
 He goes, lit up with that appalling smile !

[*To POLYXINA after a pause.*

At least you understand all this ?

Pol These means
Of our defence—these measures of preservation?

Cha It must be the best way: I should have else
Withered beneath his scorn

Pol What would you say?

Cha Why, you don't think I mean to keep the crown,
Polyxena?

Pol You then believe the story
In spite of all—that Victor's coming?

Cha Believe it?

I know that he is coming, feel the strength
That has upheld me leave me at his coming!
'T was mine and now he takes his own again.
Some kind of strength we well enough to have,
But who's to have that strength? Let my crown go!
I meant to keep it—but I cannot—cannot!
Only, he shall not taunt me—he, the first . . .
See if he would not be the first to taunt me
With having left his kingdom at a word.
With letting it be conquered without stroke.
With no no—it is no worse than when he left!
I've just to bid him take it, and, that over,
We'll fly away—fly, for I loathe this Turin,
This Rivoli, all titles loathe, all state.
We'd best go to your country—unless God
Send I die now!

Pol. Charles, hear me

Cha And again
Shall you be my Polyxena—you'll take me

Out of this woe ! Yes, do speak, and keep speaking !
 I would not let you speak just now, for fear
 You'd counsel me against him but talk, now,
 As we two used to talk in blessed times
 Bid me endure all his caprices, take me
 From this mad post above him !

Pol

I believe

We are undone, but from a different cause
 All your resources, down to the last guard
 Are at D'Onze's beck What if the while,
 He act in concert with your father ? We
 Indeed were lost This lonely Rival—
 Where find a better place for them ?

Cha [*patting the room*]

And why

Does Victor come ? To undo all that's done
 Restore the past, prevent the future Sent
 His mistress in your seat, and place in mine

Oh, my own people, whom will you find there,
 To ask of, to consult with, to care for
 To hold up with your hands ? Whom ? One that's
 false—

False—from the head's crown to the foot's sole, false !
 The best is, that I knew it in my heart
 From the beginning, and expected this,
 And hated you, Polyxene, because
 You saw thro' him, though I too saw thro' him,
 Saw that he meant this while he crowned me, while
 He prayed for me—nay, while he kissed my brow,
 I saw—

Pol. But if your measures take effect,
D'Ormea true to you ?

Cha Then worst of all !
I shall have loosed that callous wretch on him !
Well may the woman taunt him with his child—
I, eating here his bread, clothed in his clothes,
Scoted up on his seat, let slip D'Ormea
To outrage him ! We talk perchance he tears
My father from his bed, the old hands feel
For one who is not but who should be there
He finds D'Ormea ! D'Ormea too finds him !
The crowded chamber when the lights go out—
Closed door—the horrid scuffle in the dark—
The accursed prompting of the minute ! My guards !
To horse—and utter with me—and prevent !

Pol [*seizing his hand*] King Charles ! Pause here
upon this strip of time
Allotted you out of eternity !
Crowns we from God—in his name you hold yours
Your life's no least ann—were it fit your life
Should be buried along with rule, but now,
Keep both—Your duty is to live and rule—
You, who would vulgarly look fine enough
In the world's eye, degrading your soul's charge,—
Ay, you would have men's praise, this Rivoli
Would be illumined ! While, as 't is, no doubt,
Something of stain will ever rest on you,
No one will rightly know why you refused
To abdicate, they'll talk of deeds you could

I have done, no doubt,—nor do I much expect
 Future achievement will blot out the past,
 I envelope it in haze—nor shall we two
 Live happy any more. 'T will be, I feel,
 Only in moments that the duty 's seen
 As palpably as now—the months, the years
 Of painful indistinctness are to come,
 While daily must we tread these palace rooms
 Pregnant with memories of the past—your eye
 May turn to mine and find no comfort there,
 Through fancies that beset me, as yourself,
 Of other courses, with far other issues,
 We might have taken this great night: such bear,
 As I will bear! What matters happiness?
 Duty! There 's man's one moment—this is yours!

[Putting the crown on his head, takes the prism in his hand, she places him on his seat above us and retires.]

Enter D'OFEMIA and VICTOR.

Vu. At last I speak; but once—tho' once, to you!
 'T is you I ask, not these your varletry,
 Who 's King of us?

Cha. [from his seat.] Count 'T is none . . .

Ia.

What your spies

Assert I ponder in my soul, I say
 Here to your face, amid your guards! I choose
 To take again the crown whose shadow I gave—
 For still its potency surrounds the weak
 White locks their felon hands have discomposed.
 Or I'll not ask who 's King, but simply, who

Withholds the crown I claim? Deliver it!
 I have no friend in the wide world: nor France
 Nor England cares for me—you see the sun
 Of what I can avail—Deliver it!

Cha Take it, my father!

And now say in turn,

Was it done well my father—sure not well,
 To try me thus! I might have seen much cause
 For keeping it—too easily seen cause!
 But, from that moment—then more woefully
 My life had pined away than pine it will.
 Already you have much to answer for
 My life to pine is nothing—never sunk eyes
 Were happy once! No doubt my people think
 I am their King still . . . but I cannot strive!
 Take it!

Vic [*on his hand on the crown CHARLES offers, the other*
on his neck] So ten years give it quietly,

My son! It will drop from me—See you not?
 A crown's unlike a sword to give away—
 That, let a strong hand to a weak hand give!
 But crowns should slip from palsied brows to heads
 Young as this head—yet mine is weak enough,
 Even weaker than I knew—I seek for phrases
 To vindicate my right—'Tis of a piece!
 All is alike gone by with me—who bear
 Once D'Orleans in his lines—his very lines!
 To have been Eugene's comrade, Louis' rival,
 And now . . .

Cha. [*putting the crown on him, to the rest*] The King speaks, yet none kneels, I think !

Vic. I am then King ! As I became a King
Despite the nations, kept myself a King,
So I die King, with Kingship dying too
Around me ! I have lasted Europe's time !
What wants my story of completion ? Where
Must needs the dunning break show ? Who mistrusts
My children here—tell they of any break
'I twist my day's sunrise and its fiery fall ?
And who were by me when I died but they ?
D'Oimeas there !

Cha. What means he ?

Vic. I've there !

Charles—how to save your story ? Mine must go !
Say—say that you refused the crown to me !
Charles, yours shall be my story ! You immured
Me, say, at Rivoli. A single year
I spend without a sight of you, then die—
That will serve every purpose—tell that tale
The world !

Cha. Mistrust me ? Help !

Vic. Past help, past reach !

'Tis in the heart—you cannot reach the heart
Thus broke mine, that I did believe, you, Charles,
Would have denied and so disgraced me.

Pol.

Charles

Has never ceased to be your subject, sir !
He reigned at first through setting up yourself

As pattern if he e'er seemed harsh to you,
 'T was from a too intense appreciation
 Of your own character he acted you—
 Ne'er for an instant did I think it real,
 Nor look for any other than this end.
 I hold him world the wiser on that account;
 But so it was.

Charles [To POPEA] I love you now indeed!

[To VICTOR] You never knew me!

Victor Hush till this moment,

When I seem learning many other things
 Because the time for using them is past
 It 't were to do again! I thus sadly wished
 Truthfulness might prove policy as good
 As guile—Is this my daughter's forehead? Yes:
 I've made it fitter now to be a queen's
 Than formerly—I've ploughed the deep lines there
 Which keep too well a crown from slipping off.
 No matter—Guile has made me King again
*Louis—'t was in King Victor's time—long since,
 When Louis reigned and I, Victor, reigned.*
 How the world talks already of us two!
 God of eclipse and even discoloured star,
 Why do I linger then?

Ha! Where lurks he?

D'Ormea! Nearer to your King! Now stand!

[Collecting his strength as D'Ormea approaches.]

You lied, D'Ormea! I do not repent. *[Dies]*

DRAMATIC LYRICS.

In a late edition were collected and redistributed the pieces first published in 1842, 1845 and 1855 respectively, under the titles of "Dramatic Lives," "Dramatic Romances," and "Men and Women." It is not worth while to disturb this arrangement.

Part of the Poems were indebted to my dear friend John Kenyon, I hope the whole may obtain the honour of an association with his memory.

R. B

DRAMATIC LYRICS.

CAVALIER TUNES.*

• I. MARCHING ALONG.

I.

KENTISH Sir Byng stood for his King,
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament swing.
And, pressing a troop unable to stoop
And see the rogues flourish and hoic a folk droop,
Marched them along, fifty score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song

II.

God for King Charles! Pym and such caities
To the Devil that prompts 'em their treasonous parles!

* Such Poems as the majority in this volume might also come properly enough, I suppose, under the head of 'Dramatic Pieces,' being, though often Lyric in expression, always Dramatic in principle, and so being utterances of so many imaginary persons, not mine — R. B.

Cavaliers, up ! Iaps from the cup,
Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor sup
Till you 're—

(Chorus) *Ma chins along, fifty-score strong,
Gentlemen, singing the* 17

III

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies' knell.
Serve Hazelrig, Eiennes, and young Harry as well !
Englan I, good cheer ! Rupert is near !
Kentish and loyalts, keep we not here

(Chorus) *In Iun d i , fifty score strong,
Gentlemen, singing this song !*

IV

Then, God for King Charles ! Pym and his snarls
To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent carles !
Hold by the right, you double your might ,
So, onward to Nottingham, fresh for the fight,

(Chorus) *March along, fifty-score strong,
Gentlemen, singing this song !*

II. GIVE A ROUSE.

I

King Charles, and who 'll do him right now ?
King Charles, and who 's ripe for fight now ?
Give a rouse : here 's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles !

II.

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you 'd say ;
 Many's the friend there, will listen and pray
 " God's luck to gallants that stuke up the lay—

(Chorus) " Boot, saddle, to horse, and away ! "

III.

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,
 Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads' array :
 Who laughs, " Good fellows ere this, by my fay,

(Chorus) " Boot, saddle, to horse, and away ! "

IV.

Who? My wife Gertrude, that, honest and gay,
 Laughs when you talk of surrendering, " Nay !
 " I've better counsellors ; what counsel they ?

(Chorus) " Boot, saddle, to horse, and away ! "

THE LOST LEADER.

I.

Just for a handful of silver he left us,
 Just for a riband to stick in his coat ;
 Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
 Lost all the others, she lets us devote
 They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
 So much was theirs who so little allowed.

How all our copper had gone for his service !

Rags —were they purple, his heart had been proud !
We that had loved him so, followed him, honoured him,
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die !

Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
Burns, Shelley, were with us, they watch from their
graves !

He alone breaks from the vain and the feeble men
He alone sinks to the real and the lives !

II

We shall march prospering, —not thro' his presence,
Songs may inspire us,— not from his lyre,
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade a prize
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,

One task more declined one more footpath untrod,
One more 'devils'-triumph and so too for angels,

One wrong more to man, one more insult to God !
Life's night begins . let him never come back to us !

There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again !

Best fight our wall, for we taught him "strike gallantly,"

Mensons our heart ere we master his own,
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne !

**"HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS
FROM GIËNT TO AIX."**

[16—]

I

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he,
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three'
"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the gate bolt
undrew,
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through,
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast

II

Not a word to each other, we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our
place,
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the check strap, clained slacken the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

III.

"It was moonset at starting, but while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear,

At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see ;
At Duffeld, 't was morning as plain as could be ;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-
chime,
So, Joris broke silence with, " Yet there is time " "

IV.

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun.
And against him the cattle stood black every one.
'To stare thro' the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
'The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray

V.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other picked out on his track,
And one eye's black intelligence, over that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master's glance !
And the thick heavy spume flakes which use and anon
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on

VI

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned, and cried Joris, " Stay
spur !
' Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault ' not in her,
" We 'll remember at Aix "—for one heard the quick
where,
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering
knees, .

And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

VII

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like
chaff,
Till over by Dalhem a dome spire sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in sight!"

VIII.

"How they'll greet us!"—and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and cloup over, lay dead as a stone,
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

IX.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet name, my horse without peer,
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, ~~my~~ noise, bad or
good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is, friends flocking round
 As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground ;
 And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
 As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
 Which (the burghesses voted by common consent)
 Was no more than his due who brought good news from
 Ghent.

THROUGH THE METIDJA TO ABD EL KADR.

1842.

I.

As I ride, as I ride,
 With a full heart for my guide,
 So its tide rocks my side,
 As I ride, as I ride,
 That, as I were double eyed,
 He, in whom our Tribes confide,
 Is descried, ways untried
 As I ride, as I ride.

II.

As I ride, as I ride
 To our Chief and his Allied,
 Who dares chide my heart's pride
 As I ride, as I ride ?

Or are witnesses denied—
Through the desert waste and wide
Do I glide unespied
As I ride, as I ride ?

III

As I ride, as I ride,
When in inner voice has cried,
The sands shile, not shile
(As I ride, as I ride)
O'er each visioned homicide
Thit came vaunting (ha! he lied?)
To reside —where he died,
As I ride, as I ride

IV

As I ride, as I ride,
Necar has spur my swift horse phed,
Yet has hide, stried and pried,
As I ride, as I ride
Shows where sweat has sprung and dried,
—Zebra footed, ostrich thighed—
How has vied stride with stride
As I ride, as I ride !

V

As I ride, as I ride,
Could I loose what Fate has tied,⁶
Ere I pried, she should hide
(As I ride, as I ride)

All that 's meant me—satisfied
 When the Prophet and the Bride
 Stop veins I 'd have subside
 As I ride, as I ride !

NATIONALITY IN DRINKS.

I

My heart sank with' our Claret flask,
 Just now, beneath the heavy sidges
 That serve this pond's black face for mask,
 And still at yonder broken edre
 O' the hole, where up the bubbles glisten,
 After my heart I look and I stop

II

Our laughing little flask, complicit
 Thro' depth to depth more black and shady,
 As when, both arms beside her held,
 Feet straightened out, some gay French lily
 Is caught up from life's light and motion,
 And dropped into death's silent ocean !

Up jumped Tokay on our table,
 Like a pygmy castle-warder,
 Dwarfish to see, but stout and able,
 Arms and accoutrements all in order ;

And fierce he looked North, then, wheeling South,
 Blew with his bugle a challenge to Drouth;
 Cocked his flap hat with the tosspote-feather,
 Twisted his thumb in his red moustache,
 Jingled his huge brass spurs together,
 Tightened his wust with its Juda sash,
 And then, with an impudence nought could abash,
 Shrugged his hump shoulder, to tell the beholder,
 For twenty such knaves he should laugh but the bolder.
 And so, with his sword hilt gallantly jutting,
 And dexter hand on his haunch abutting,
 Went the little man Sir Ausbruch, strutting!

— — —

Here 's to Nelson's memory!
 'T is the second time that I, at sea,
 Right off Cape Trafalgar here,
 Have drunk it deep in British Beel.
 Nelson for ever—any time
 Am I his to command in prose or rhyme!
 Give me of Nelson only a touch,
 And I save it, be it little or much
 Here 's one our Captain gives, and so
 Down at the word, by George, shall it go!
 He says that at Greenwich they point the beholder
 To Nelson's coat, "still with tar on the shoulder,
 "For he used to lean with one shoulder rigging,
 "Jigging, as it were, and zig zag-zigging
 "Up against the mizen-rigging!"

GARDEN FANCIES

I. THE FLOWER'S NAME

I

HERE 's the garden she walked across,
 And in my aim, such a short while since -
 Hark, now I push its wicket, the moss
 Hinders the hinges and makes them wince -
 She must have reached this shrub ere she turned,
 As back with that murmur the wicket swung,
 For she laid the poor snail my chance foot spurned,
 To feed and forget it the leaves among.

II

Down this side of the gravel walk
 She went while her robe's edge brushed the box:
 And here she paused in her gracious talk
 To point me a moth on the milk white phlox
 Roses, ranged in valiant row,
 I will never think that she passed you by -
 She loves you noble roses, I know,
 But you'll see, where the rock plants lie -

III

This flower she stopped at, finger on lip,
 Stooped over, in doubt, as settling its claim;

Till she gave me, with pride to make no slip,
 Its soft meandering Spanish name :^o
 What a name ! Was it love or praise ?
 Speech half asleep or song half awake ?
 I must learn Spanish, one of these days,
 Only for that slow sweet name's sake.

IV

Roses, if I live and do well
 I may bring her, one of these days,
 To fix you fast with as fine a spell,
 Fit you each with his Spanish phrase ;
 But do not detain me now, for she lingers
 There, like sunshine over the ground,
 And ever I see her soft white fingers
 Searching, after the bud she found

V

Flower, you Spanish, look that you grow not,
 Stay as you are and be loved for ever !
 But, if I kiss you 't is that you blow not,
 Mind, the shut pink mouth opens never !
 For while it pouts, her fingers wrestle,
 Twinkling the audacious leaves between,
 Till round they turn and down they nestle—
 Is not the dear mark still to be seen ?

VI.

Where I find her not, beauties vanish ;
 Whither I follow her, beauties flee ;

I there no method to tell her in Spanish
 June's twice June since she breathed it with me?
 Come, bud, show me the least of her traces,
 I treasure my lady's lightest footfall!
 — Ah, you may flout and turn up your faces—
 Roses, you are not so full after all!

II SIBRANDUS SCHIMMELPENNINCK.

I

Plague take all your pedants say I!
 He who wrote what I hold in my hand,
 Centuries back was so good as to die
 Leaving this rubbish to cumber the land
 This, that was a book in its time
 Printed on paper and bound in leather
 Last month in the white of a mutin punch
 Just when the birds sang all together

II

Into the garden I brought it to read,
 And under the arbut and lunastine
 Read it, so help me grace in my need,
 From title-page to closing line
 Chapter on chapter did I count,
 As a curious traveller counts Stonchenge;
 Added up the mortal amount,
 And then proceeded to my revenge.

III.

Yonder 's a plum-tree with a crevice
 An owl would build in, were he but sage ;
 For a lap of moss, like a fine pont levis
 In a castle of the middle age,
 Joins to a lip of gum, pure amber ,
 When he 'd be private, there might he spend
 Hours alone in his lady's chamber :
 Into this crevice I dropped our friend.

IV.

Splash, went he, as under he ducked,
 —At the bottom, I knew, run-drippings stagnate
 Next, a handful of blossoms I plucked
 To bury him with, my bookshelf's magnate ;
 Then I went in doors, brought out a loaf,
 Half a cheese, and a bottle of Chablis ;
 Lay on the grass and forgot the oaf
 Over a jolly chapter of Rabclais.

V.

Now, this morning, betwixt the moss
 And gum that locked our friend in limbo,
 A spider had spun his web across,
 And sat in the midst with arms akimbo :
 So, I took pity, for learning's sake,
 And, *de profundis, accentibus latis*,
 Quoth I, as I got a rake ;
 And, up I fished his delectable treatise.

VI.

Here you have it dry in the sun,
 With all the binding all of a blister,
 And great blue spots where the ink has run,
 And reddish streaks that wink and glister
 O'er the page so beautifully yellow
 Oh, well have the droppings played their tricks!
 Did he guess how toadstools grow, this fellow?
 Here's one stuck in his chapter six!

VII

How did he like it when the live creatures
 Tickled and toused and browsed him all over,
 And worm, slug, eel, with serious features,
 Came in, each one, for his night of traver?
 —When the water beetle with great blind denture
 Made of her eggs the stately deposit,
 And the newt borrowed just so much of the preface
 As tiled in the top of his black will's closet?

VIII.

All that life and fun and romping,
 All that frisking and twisting and coupling,
 While slowly our poor friend's leaves were swamping
 And claps were cracking and covers suppling!
 As if you had carried sour John Knox
 To the playhouse at Paris, Vienna or Munich,
 Fastened him into a front-row box,
 And danced off the ballet with trousers and tunic,

IX,

Come, old martyr ! What, torment enough is it ?
 Back to my room shall you take your sweet self.
 Good bye, mother beetle, husband-est, *suffice* !
 See the snug niche I have made on my shelf !
 A's book shall prop you up, B's shall cover you,
 Here's C to be grave with, or D to be gay,
 And with E on each side, and I right over you,
 Dry rot it ease till the Judgment day !

SONNET OF THE SPANISH CLOISTER.

I

GRRR— there go, my heart's abhorrence !
 Water your dunned flower pots, do !
 If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,
 God's blood, would not mine kill you !
 What ? your myrtle bush wants trimming ?
 Oh, that rose has prior clums—
 Needs its laden vase filled brimming ?
 Hell dry you up with its flames !

II

At the meal we sit together :
Salve tibi ! I must hear
 Wise talk of the kind of weather,
 Sort of season, time of year :

*Not a plentiful cork-crop: scarcely
Dare we hope oak-galls, I doubt
What's the Latin name for "parsley?"
What's the Greek name for Swine's Snout?*

III

Whew! We'll have our platter burnished
Laid with care on our own shelf!
With a fire new spoon we're furnished,
And a goblet for ourself,
Rinsed like something sacramental
Ere 't is fit to touch our chaps—
Marked with L for our initial!
(He-he! There his hily snugs!)

IV

*Saint, forsooth! While Brown Dolores
Squats outside the Convent bank
With Sanchichos, telling stories,
Steeping treasuries in the tuid
Blue-black, lustrous, thick like horschairs,
—Can't I see his dead eye glow,
Bright as 't were a Barbary corsair?
(That is, if he'd let it show.)*

V

When he finishes refection,
Knife and fork he never lays
Cross-wise, to my recollection,
As do I, in Jesu's praise.

I the Trinity illustrate,
 Drinking watered orange-pulp—
 In thice sips the Ari in frustrate;
 While he drums his at one gulp.

VI.

Oh, those melons? If he 's able
 We 'ie to have a feast! so nice!
 One goes to the Abbot's table,
 All of us get each a slice.
 How go on your flowers? None double?
 Not one fruit sort can you spy?
 Strange!—And I, too, at such trouble
 Keep them close nipped on the sl, i

VII

There 's a gre it text in Gratians,
 Once you tip on it, entails
 Twenty nine distinct damnations,
 One sure, if mothe fuls.
 If I tip him ju t a dymr,
 Sure of heaven is sure can be,
 Spin him round and send him flying
 Off to hell, a Manichee?

VIII.

Or, my scrofulous French novel
 On grey paper with blunt type!
 Simply glance at it, you grovel
 Hand and foot in Behal's gripe!

If I double down its pages
At the wofeful sixteenth print,
When he gathers his greengages,
Ope a sieve and slip it in 't?

IX

Or, there 's Satan ! —one might venture,
Pledge one's soul to him, yet leave
Such a flaw in the indenture
As he 'd miss till, past retrieve,
Blasted lay that rose which
We 're so proud of ! *He, /, Him . . .*
'St, there's Vespers ! *Plena, salu*
Ave, Virgo ! Gili you swim !

THE LABORATORY.

ANCIENT REGIME

I

Now that I, tying thy glass mask tightly,
May gaze thro' these faint smoke's curling whitely,
As thou phrest thy trade in this devil's smithy—
Which is the poison to poison her pithicc?

II

He is with her, and they know that I know
Where they are, what they do —they' believe my tears
flow
While they laugh, laugh at me, at me fled to the draw,
Empty church, to pray God in, for them !—I am here.

III

Grind away, moisten and mash up thy paste,
 Pound at thy powder,—I am not in haste !
 Better sit thus, and observe thy strange things,
 Than go where men wait me and dance at the King's.

IV

That in the mortar you call it a gum ?
 Ah, the brave lie whence such gold oozings come !
 And yonder soft phial the exquisite blue,
 Sure to taste sweetly is that poison too !

V

Had I but all of them thee and thy treasures,
 What a wild crowd of invisible pleasures !
 To carry pure dith in an emerald casket,
 A signet, a fan mount, a filigree basket !

VI

Soon, at the King's a mere lozenge to give
 And Pauline should have just thirty minutes to live !
 But to light a pipe, and I lie, with her head
 And her breast and her arms and her hands, should
 drop dead !

VII

Quick—is it finished ? The colour's too grim !
 Why not soft like the phials, enticing and dim ?
 Let it brighten her drink, let her turn it and see,
 And try it and taste, ere she fix and prefer !

VIII.

What a drop ! She's not little, no minion like me !
That's why she ensnared him this never will free
The soul from those masculine eyes,—say, "no !"
To that pulse's magnificent come and go

IX.

I or only last night, as they whispered, I brought
My own eyes to bear on her so, that I thought
Could I keep them one half minute fixed, she would fall
Shriveled, she fell not, yet this does it all !

X.

Not that I bid you spare her the pain,
Let death be felt and the proof remain :
Brand, burn up, bite into its groove—
He is sure to remember her dying face !

XI.

Is it done ? Take my mask off ! Nay, be not morose ;
It kills her, and this prevents seeing it close.
The delicate droplet, my whole fortune's tell !
If it hurts her, beside, can it ever hurt me ?

XII.

Now, take all my jewels, gorge gold to your fill,
You may kiss me, old man, on my mouth if you will !
But brush this dust off me, lest horror it brings
Ere I know it—next moment I dance at the King's !

THE CONFESSIONAL

[SI AIN.]

1

It is a lie—then Priests, their Pope,
 Their Sunts, their . all they fear or hope
 Are lies, and lies—there ' through my door
 And ceiling, there ' and walls and floor, '
 I here, lies they lie—shall still be huddled
 Till spite of them I reach the world !

6

I

You think Priests just and holy men,
Before they put me in this den
I was a human creature too,
With flesh and blood like one of you,
A girl that laughed in beauty's pride
I like life in your world outside.

III.

I had a lover— shame avaunt '
This poor wretched body, grim and gaunt,
Was kissed all over til' it burned,
By lips the truest, love e'er turned
His heart's own tint one night they kissed
My soul out in a burning mist.

IV.

So, next day when the accustomed train
Of things grew round my sense again,
"That is a sin," I said and slow
With downcast eyes to church I go,
And pass to the confession chair,
And tell the old mild father there

V

But when I falter Beltran's name,
"Ha?" quoth the father, "much I blame
'The sin, yet wherefore idly grieve?
"Despair not—stronuously retrieve!"
"Nay, I will turn this love of thine
"To lawful love, almost divine,

VI

"For he is young, and led astray,
"This Beltran, and he schemes men say,
"To change the laws of church and state,
"So, thine shall be an unequal fate,
"Who, ere the thunder breaks should roll
"Its cloud away and save his soul

VII

"For, when he lies upon thy breast,
"Thou mayst demand and be possessed
"Of all his plans, and next day tell
"To me, and all those plans reveal,
"That I and every priest, to purge
"His soul, may fast and use the scourge."

VIII

That father's beard was long and white,
 With love and truth his brow seemed bright;
 I went back, all on fire with joy,
 And, that same evening, bade the boy,
 Tell me, as lovers should, heart free,
 Something to prove his love of me

IX

He told me what he would not tell
 For hope of heaven or fear of hell,
 And I lay listening, in such pride,
 And, soon as he had left my side
 Tripped to the church by morning light
 To save his soul in his despite

X

I told the father all his scheme,
 Who were his comrades, what their dreams;
 "And now make haste," I said, "to play
 The one spot from his soul away,
 "To night he comes, but not the same
 "Will look! At night he never came,

XI

Nor next night on the after morn,
 I went forth with a strength new born.
 The church was empty, something drew
 My steps into the street, I knew
 It led me to the market place
 Where, lo, on high, the father's face!

XII.

That horrible black scaffold dressed,
That stapled block . . God sink the rest !
That head strapped back, that blinding vest,
Those knotted hands and naked breast,
Till near one busy hangman pressed,
And, on the neck these arms caressed. . . .

XIII

No part in aught they hope or fear !
No heaven with them, no hell !—and here,
No earth, not so much space as pens
My body in their worst of dens
But shall Bear God and man my cry,
Lies—lies, again—and still, thy lie !

— — — — —

CRISTINA.

I

She should never have looked at me
If she meant I should not love her !
There are plenty . . men, you call such,
I suppose . . she may discover
All her soul to, if she pleases,
And yet leave much as she found them :
But I'm not so, and she knew it
When she fixed me, glancing round them.

II

What? To fix me thus meant nothing?
 But I can't tell (there's my weakness)
 What her look said!—no vile cant, sure,
 About "need to strew the bleakness
 "Of some lone shore with its pearl seed,
 "That the sea feels"—no "strange yearning
 "That such souls have, most to lavish
 "Where there's chance of least returning."

III

Oh we're sunk enough here, God knows!
 But not quite so sunk that moments,
 Sure tho' seldom, are denied us,
 When the spirit's true endowments
 Stand out plainly from its false ones,
 And apprise it in pursuing
 Or the right way or the wrong way,
 To its triumph or undoing.

IV

There are flashes struck from midnights,
 There are fire flames noonday's kindle,
 Whereby piled up honours perish,
 Whereby swollen ambitions dwindle,
 While just this or that poor impulse,
 Which for once had play unstilled,
 Seems the sole work of a life-time
 That away the rest have trifled.

V.

Doubt you if in some such moment,
 As she fixed me, she felt clearly,
 Ages past the soul existed,
 Here an age 't is resting merely,
 And hence fleets again for ages,
 While the true end, sole and single,
 It stops here for is, this love-way,
 With some other soul to mingle?

VI.

Else it loses what it lived for,
 And eternally must lose it;
 Better ends may be in prospect,
 Deeper blisses (if you choose it),
 But this life's end and this love-bliss
 Have been lost here. Doubt you whether
 This she felt as, looking at me,
 Mine and her souls rushed together?

VII.

Oh, observe! Of course, next moment,
 The world's honours, in derision,
 Trampled out the light for ever:
 Never fear but there 's provision
 Of the devil's to quench knowledge
 That we walk the earth in rapture!
 Making those who catch God's secret
 Just so much more prize their capture!

VIII

Such am I the secret 's mine now !
 She has lost me, I have gained her ;
 Her soul 's mine and thus, grown perfect,
 I shall pass my life's remainder.
 Life will just hold out the proving
 Both our powers, alone and blended .
 And then come the next life quickly !
 This world's use will have been ended.

THE LOST MISERIES.

I

All 's over, then does truth sound bitter
 As one at first believes ?
 Hark, 't is the sparrows' good night twitter
 About your cottage eaves !

II

And the leaf buds on the vine are woolly,
 I noticed that, to day ,
 One day more bursts them open fully
 — You know the red turns grey

III

To morrow we meet the same then, dearest ?
 May I take your hand in mine ?
 More friends are we,—well, friends the more
 Keep much that I resign :

IV.

For each glance of the eye so bright and black,
 Though I keep with heart's endeavour,—
 Your voice, when you wish the snowdrops back,
 Though it stay in my soul for ever!—

V

Yet I will but say what more friends say,
 Or only a thought stronger,
 I will hold your hand but as long as all may,
 Or so very little longer!



"EARTH'S IMMORTALITIES

I AMI

SEE, as the prettiest graves will do in time,
 Our poet's wants the freshness of its prime,
 Spite of the sexton's browsing horse, the sods
 Have struggled through its binding osier rods,
 Headstone and half-sunk footstone lean awry
 Wanting the brick work promised by and by,
 How the minute grey lichens plate o'er plate,
 Have softened down the crisp cut name and date!

IOVF

Sp. the year's done with!
(Love me for ever!)

All March begun with, ^{o' t' a t}
 April's endeavour; ^{o'}
 May-wreaths that bound me
 June needs must sever;
 Now snows fall round me,
 Quenching June's fever—
(Love me for ever!)

— — — — —

MEETING AT NIGHT.

I.

THE grey sea and the long black land;
 And the yellow half moon large and low;
 And the startled little waves that leap
 In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
 As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
 And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

II

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
 Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
 A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
 And blue spout of a lighted match, ^{o'}
 And a voice less loud, thro' its joys and fears,
 Than the two hearts beating each to each!

PARTING AT MORNING.

ROUND the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me

— —

SONG.

I.

NAY but you, who do not love her,
Is she not pure gold, my mistress?
Holds earth aught — speak truth — above her?
Aught like this tress, see, and this tress
And this last fairest tress of all,
So fair, see, ere I let it fall?

II

Because, you spend your lives in praising,
To praise, you search the wide world over.
Then why not witness, calmly gazing,
If earth holds aught — speak truth — above her?
Above this tress, and this, I touch
But cannot praise, I love so much!

—

A WOMAN'S LAST WORD.

I

LET us contend no more, Love,
 Strive nor weep
 All be as before, I owe,
 -Only sleep!

II

What so wild as words are?
 I and thou
 In debate, as birds are,
 Hawk on bough!

III

See the creature stalking
 While we speak!
 Hush and hide the talking,
 Cheek on cheek!

IV

What so false as truth is,
 I use to thee?
 Where the serpent's tooth is,
 Shun the tree—

V

Where the apple reddens,
 Never pry—
 Lest we lose our Edens,
 Eve and I.

VI

Be a god and hold me
 With a charm !
 Be a man and fold me
 With thine arm !

VII

Teach me, only teach, I ove !
 As I ought
 I will speak thy speech, Love,
 Think thy thought—

VIII

Meet, if thou require it,
 Both demands,
 Laying flesh and spirit
 In thy hands

IX

That shall be to morrow
 Not to-night .
 I must bury sorrow
 Out of sight

X.

—Must a little weep, Love,
 (Foolish me !)
 And so fall asleep, Love,
 Loved by thee.

EVELYN HOPE.

I

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead !

Sit and watch by her side an hour.

That is her book shelf, thus her bed ,

She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die too, in the glass ,

Little has yet been changed, I think .

The shutters are shut no light may pass

Save two long rays thro' the lung's chink.

II

Sixteen years old when she died !

Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name ;

It was not her time to love , beside,

Her life had many a hope and aim,

Duties enough and little cares,

And now was quiet, now astir,

Till God's hand beckoned unawares,—

And the sweet white brow is all of her.

III

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope ?

What, your soul was pure and true,

The good stars met in your horoscope,

Made you of spirit, fire and dew—

And, just because I was thine as old

And our paths in the world diverged so wide,

Each was nought to each, must I be told ?

We were fellow mortals, nought beside ?

IV

No, indeed I, for God above
 Is great to grant, as mighty to make.
 And creates the love to reward the love.
 I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
 Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
 Through worlds I shall traverse not a few:
 Much is to learn, much to forget
 Ere the time be come for taking you

V

But the time will come,—at last it will,
 When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
 In the lower earth, in the years long still
 That body and soul so pure and gay?
 Why your hair was ambly, I shall divine,
 And your mouth of your own Eranium's red
 And what you would do with me, in time,
 In the new life come in the old one's stead

VI

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
 Given up myself so many times,
 Gained me the gains of various men,
 Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes,
 Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
 Either I missed or itself missed me
 And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
 What is the issue? let us see!

VII.

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while!

My heart seemed full as it could hold?

There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,

And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.

So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep:

See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand!

There, that is our secret. go to sleep!

You will wake, and remember, and understand.

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS.

I.

WHERE the quiet coloured end of evening smiles

Miles and miles

On the solitary pastures where our sheep

Half asleep

Tinkle homeward thro' the twilight, stray or stop

As they crop--

Was the site once of a city great and gay,

(So they say)

Of our country's very capital, its prince

Ages since

Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far

Peace or war.

II.

Now,—the country does not even boast a tree,

As you see,

To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
 From the hills
 Intersect and give a name to, (else they run
 Into one)
 Where the domed and daring palace shot its spires
 Up like fires
 O'er the hundred gated circuit of a wall
 Bounding all,
 Made of marble, men might march on nor be pressed,
 Twelve abreast

III

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
 Never was !
 Such a carpet as, this summer time, o'erspreads
 And embeds
 Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
 'Stock or stone—
 Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe
 Long ago ;
 Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of shame
 Struck them tame ;
 And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
 Bought and sold.

IV

Now,—the single little turret that remains
 On the plains,
 By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
 Overscored,

While the patching houseleek's head of blossom winks
 Through the chinks—
 Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
 Sprang sublime,
 And a burning ring all round, the chariots traced
 As they raced
 And the monarch and his minions and his flames
 Viewed the game

v

And I know while thus the quiet coloured eve
 Smiles to leave
 To them telling all our many tinkling fleece
 In which we
 And the slope and hills in undistinguished grey
 Melt away—
 That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair
 Waits me there
 In the turret whence the chameleons caught soul
 For the soul,
 When the king looked, where she looks now, breathless,
 dumb
 Till I come

vi

But he looked upon the city, every side,
 Far and wide,
 All the mountains topped with temples, all the glades'
 Colonnades,

All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts,--and then,
 All the men !
 When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
 Either hand
 On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
 Of my face,
 Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
 Each on each.

VII

In one year they sent a million lighters forth
 South and North,
 And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
 As the sky,
 Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force--
 Gold, of course
 Oh heart ! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns !
 Earth's returns
 For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin !
 Shut them in,
 With their triumphs and their glories and the rest !
 Love is best.

A LOVLERS' QUARRIL.

I

Oh, what a dawn of day !
 How the March sun feels like May !
 All is blue again
 After last night's rain,

And the South dries the hawthorn-spray
 Only, my Love's away !
 I 'd as lief that the blue were grey.

II

Runnels, which rilllets swell,
 Must be dicing down the dell,
 With a foaming head
 On the boyl bed
 Paven smooth as a hermit's cell
 Each with a tile to tell,
 Could my Love but attend as well

III

Dearest, three months ago
 When we lived blocked up with snow,—
 When the wind would edge
 In and in his wedge,
 In, as far as the point could go
 Not to our angle, though,
 Where we loved each the other so !

I

Laughs with so little cause !
 We devised games out of straws
 We would try and trace
 One another's face
 In the ash, as an artist draws,
 Free on each other's flaws,
 How we chattered like two church daws !

v

What's in the "Times"? a scold
At the Emperor deep and cold,
He has taken a bride
To his gruesome side,
That's as fair as himself is bold
There they sit cunning stoled,
And she powders her hair with gold

vi

Fancy the Pimper seen!
Miles and miles of gold and green
Where the sunflower blows
In a cold glow
And to break now and then the green—
Black neck and eyeballs keen,
Up a wild horse leaps between!

vii

Trill our table turn?
Lay your hands there light and yearn
Till the yeuning slips
Thro' the finger tips
In a fire which a few discern,
And a very few feel burn
And the rest, they may live and learn!

viii

Then we would up and pace,
For a change, about the place,

Each with arm o'er neck
 'T is our quarter deck,
 We are seamen in woeful case
 Help in the ocean space!
 Or, if no help, we'll embrace

IX

See, how she looks now dressed
 In a sledge, cap and vest!
 'T is a huge fur cloak
 Like a reindeer's yoke
 Falls the puppet along the breast:
 Sleeve for her arm to rest,
 Or to hang, as my Love likes best.

X

Teach me to flirt a fun
 As the Spanish lute can,
 Or I tint your lip
 With a burnt stick's tip
 And you turn into such a man!
 Just the two spots that span
 Half the bill of the young male swan.

XI

Dearest, three months ago
 When the mesmerizer Snow
 With his hands first sweep
 Put the earth to sleep

'T was a time when the heart could show
 All—how was earth to know,
 Neath the mute hand's to-and-fro ?

XII.

Dearest, three months ago
 When we loved each other so,
 Lived and loved the same
 Till an evening came
 When a shaft from the devil's bow
 Pierced to our ingle-glow,
 And the friends were friend and foe !

XIII.

Not from the heart beneath—
 'T was a bubble born of breath,
 Neither sneer nor vaunt,
 Nor reproach nor taunt.
 See a word, how it severeth !
 Oh, power of life and death
 In the tongue, as the Preacher saith !

XIV.

Woman, and will you cast
 For a word, quite off at last
 Me, your own, your You,—
 Since, as truth is true,
 I was You all the happy past—
 Me do you leave aghast
 With the memories We amassed ?

XV.

Love, if you knew the light
 That your soul casts in my sight,
 How I look to you
 For the pure and true,
 And the beautiful and the right,—
 Bear with a monarch's spite
 When a mere mote threatens the white !

XVI.

What of a hasty word ?
 Is the fleshly heart not stirred
 By a worm's pin prick
 Where its roots are quick ?
 See the eye, by a fly's foot blurred—
 For, when a straw is heard
 Scratch the brain's coat of curd !

XVII.

Foul be the world or fair
 More or less, how can I care ?
 'T is the world the same
 For my praise or blame,
 And endurance is easy there.
 Wrong in the one thing rare—
 Oh, it is hard to bear !

XVIII.

Here 's the spring back or close,
 When the almond-blossom blows ;

We shall have the word
 In a minor third
 There is none but the cuckoo knows :
 Heaps of the guelder rose !
 I must bear with it, I suppose

XIX

Could but November come,
 Were the noisy birds struck dumb
 At the warning slash
 Of his driver's fist
 I would laugh like the salt-timb
 Facing the castle glum
 And the giant's feet farum !

XX

Then, were the world well stopped
 Of the gear where in equipped
 We can stand apart,
 Heart dispense with heart
 In the sun, with the flowers unnaped, —
 Oh, the world's hangings napped,
 We were both in a bare walled crypt !

XXI

Each in the crypt would cry
 " But one freezes here ! and why ?
 " When a heart, as chill,
 " At my own would thrill

" Back to life, and its fires out-fly ?

" Heart, shall we live or die ?

" The rest, settle by and by ! "

XXII

So, she 'd office the score,

And forgive me as before

It is twelve o'clock

I shall hear her knock

In the worst of a storm's uproar,

I shall pull her through the door,

I shall have her for evermore !

UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY

(AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON OF QUALITY)

I

HAD I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
The house for me no doubt, were a house in the city
square,

Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window
there !

II

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to hear, at
least !

There, the whole day long, one's life is a garden-feast,
While up at a villa one lives, I maintain, in no more than
a beast

III.

Well now, look at our villa ! stuck like the horn of a bull
Just on a mountain edge as bare as the creature's skull,
Save a mere snag of a bush with hardly a leaf to pull !

-I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the hair's
turned wool.

IV

But the city, oh the city the square with the houses !
Why ?

They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's something
to take the eye !

Houses in four straight lines, not a single front awry ,
You watch who crosses, and gossip, who saunters who
hurries by ,

Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw when the
sun gets high ,
And the shops with fanciful signs which are painted
properly.

V

What of a villa ? Though winter be over in March by
rights,

'T is May perhaps ere the snow shall have withered well
off the heights :

You 've the brown ploughed land before, where the oxen
strain and wheeze,

And the hills over-smoked behind by the faint grey olive
trees.

VI

Is it better in May, I ask you? You^d've summer all at
 once,
 In a day he leaps complete with a few strong April suns
 'Mid the shup short emerald wheat, scarce risen three
 fingers well
 The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red
 bell
 Like a thin clear bubble of blood for the children to pick
 and sell

VII

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a fountain to
 spout and splash!
 In the shade it sings and springs, in the shine such foam
 bows fish
 On the horses with curling fish tails, that prance and
 paddle and push
 Round the lady atop in her coach—fifty gazers do not
 abash,
 Though all that she wears is some weeds round her waist
 in a sort of sash.

VIII.

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see though you
 linger,
 Except yon cypress that points like death's lean lifted
 forefinger.

Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix i' the corn
and mingle.
Or thrud the stinking hemp till the stalks of it seem
a-tingle.
Late August or early September, the stunning cicala is
shrill.
And the bees keep their tiresome whine round the
resinous firs on the hill.
Enough of the seasons,—I spare you the months of the
fever and chill.

IX.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the blessed church-
bells begin :
No sooner the bells leave off than the diligence rattles
in
You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a
pin.
By and by there's the travelling doctor gives pills, lets
blood, draws teeth ;
Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the market beneath.
At the post-office such a scene-picture—the new play,
piping hot !
And a notice how, only this morning, three liberal thieves
were shot.
Above it, behold the Archbishop's most fatherly of rebukes,
And beneath, with his crown and his lion, some little new
law of the Duke's !

Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the Reverend Don
 So and so
 Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint Jerome and
 Cuccio,
 "And moreover," (the sonnet goes rhyming,) "the skirts
 of Saint Paul has reached,
 "Having preached us those six Lent lectures more
 unctionous than ever he preached."
 Noon strikes, here sweeps the procession! our Lady
 borne smiling and smut
 With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords
 stuck in her heart!
Ban, ban, a bang goes the drum, *tootle te-tootle* the fife,
 No keeping ones hunches still it's the greatest plea-
 sure in life

But bless you, it's dear it's dear! ~~fowls~~ wine, it
 double the rate
 They have clipped a new tax upon salt, and what oil
 pays passing the gate
 It's a honor to think of And so, the villa for me, not
 the city!
 Beggars can scarcely be choosers but still—ah, the pity,
 the pity!
 Look, two and two go the priests, then the monks with
 cowls and sandals,
 And the penitents dressed in white shifts, holding the
 yellow candles,

One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross
with handles,
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better
prevention of scandals
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle to tootle* the fife.
Oh, a day in the city square, there is no such pleasure in
life !

A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI.

I

OH Galuppi, Baldassaro, this is very sad to find !
I can hardly misconceive you, it would prove me deaf
and blind,
But although I take your meaning, 't is with such a heavy
mind !

II

Here you come with your old music, and here 's all the
good it brings
What, they lived once thus at Venice where the merchants
were the kings,
Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges used to wed the
sea with kings ?

III

Ay, because the sea 's the street there, and 't is arched
by . . . what you call
. . . Rialto's Bridge with houses on it, where they kept
the carnival :
I was never out of England—it 's as if I saw it all.

IV

Did young people take their pleasure when the sea was
warm in May?

Balls and masks begun at midnight, burning ever to mid-
day

When they made up fresh adventures for the morrow, do
you say?

V

Was a lady, such a lady, cheeks so round and lips so
red,

On her neck the small tree buoyant like a bell flower on
its bed,

O'er the breasts superb abundance where a man might
base his head?

VI

Well, and it was graceful of them they'd break talk off
and afford

— She, to bite her mask's black velvet, he, to finger on
his sword,

While you sat and played Toccata, stately at the clavi-
chord?

VII

What? Those lesser thirds so plaintive, sixths diminished
sigh on sigh,

Told them something? Those suspensions, those solu-
tions — “Must we die?”

Those commiserating sevenths — “Life might last! we
can but try!”

VIII.

"Were you happy?"—"Yes"—"And are you still as
happy?"—"Yes And you?"
—"Then, more kisses!"—"Did I stop them, when a
million seemed so few?"
Hark, the dominant's persistence till it must be an-
swered to!

IX

So, an octave truck the answer—Oh, they praise I you,
I dare say!
"Brave Galuppi that vaunted good like at grave
and by!"
I can always leave off talking when I hear a master
play!

X

Then they left you for their pleasure till in due time,
only one,
Some with lives that came to nothing, some with deeds
as well undone,
Death stepped tacitly and took them where they never
saw the sun

XI

But when I sit down to reason, think to take my stand
nor swerve
While I triumph o'er a secret wing from nature's close
reserve,
In you come with your cold music till I creep thro' every
nerve.

XII.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creaking where a house
was buined :

"Dust and ashes, dead and done with, Venice spent what
Venice earned.

"The soul, doubtless, is immortal—where a soul can be
discerned.

XIII

"Yours for instance, you know physics, something of
geology,

"Mathematics are your pastime—souls shall rise in their
degree,

"Butterflies may dread extinction,—you'll not die, it
cannot be !

XIV

"As for Venice and her people, merely born to bloom
and drop,

"Here on earth they bore their fruitage, mirth and folly
were the crop :

"What of soul was left, I wonder, when the kissing had
to stop ?

XV

"Dust and ashes !" So you creak it, and I want the
heart to scold.

Dead dead women, with such hair, too—what's become
of all the gold ?

Used to hang and brush their bosoms ? I feel chilly and
grown old.

OLD PICTURES IN FLORENCE.

I

THE morn when first it thunders in March,
 The eel in the pond gives a leap, they say.
 As I leaned and looked over the aloof arch
 Of the villa gate this warm March day,
 No flash snapped, no dumb thunder rolled
 In the valley beneath where white and wide
 And washed by the morning water gold,
 Florence lay out on the mountain side

II

River and bridge and street and square
 Lay mine, as much at my beck and call,
 Through the live translucent bath of air,
 As the sights in a magic crystal ball
 And of all I saw and of all I pruned,
 The most to praise and the best to see,
 Was the startling bell tower Giotto raised
 But why did it more than stun me?

III

Giotto, how, with that soul of your
 Could you play me false who loved you so?
 Some slights if a ceit' in heart endure
 Yet it feels, I would have your fellows know
 I' faith, I perceive not why I should care
 To break a silence that suits them best,
 But the thing grows somewhat hard to bear
 When I find a Giotto join the rest

IV.

On the arch where olives overhead
 Print the blue sky with twig and leaf,
 (That sharp curled leaf which they never shed)
 'Twas the aloes, I used to lean in chief,
 And mark through the winter afternoons,
 By a gift God rents me now and then,
 In the mild decline of those suns like moons,
 Who walked in Florence, besides her men.

V

They might chirp and chatter, come and go
 For pleasure or profit, her men alive—
 My business was hardly with them, I trow,
 But with empty cells of the human hive;
 —With the chapter room, the cloister porch,
 The church's apsis, aisle or nave,
 Its crypt, one finger along with a torch,
 Its face set full for the sun to shave.

VI

Wherever a fresco peels and drops,
 Wherever an outline weakens and wanes
 Till the latest life in the painting stops,
 Stands One whom each fainter pulse-tick pains:
 One, wishful each scrap should clutch the brick,
 Each tinge not wholly escape the plaster,
 —A lion who dies of an ass's kick,
 The wronged great soul of an ancient Master.

VII

For oh, this world and the wrong it does !
 They are safe in heaven with their backs to it
 The Michaels and Rafuels, you hum and buzz
 Round the works of, you of the little wit !
 Do their eyes contract to the earth's old scope,
 Now that they see God face to face,
 And have all attained to be poets, I hope ?
 'T is their holiday now, in any case

VIII

Much they reckon of your praise and you !
 But the wronged great soul — can they be quit
 Of a world where their work is all to do,
 Where you style them, you of the little wit,
 Old Master This and I only the Other,
 Not dreaming that Old and New are fellows :
 A younger succeeds to an elder brother,
 De Vincis derive in good time from Dellos.

IX

And here where your praise might yield returns,
 And a handsome word or two give help,
 Here, after your kind, the mastiffs mow
 And the puppy pack of poodles yelp
 What not a word for Stefano there,
 Of brow once prominent and tawny,
 Called Nature's Ape and the world's de pair
 For his peerless painting ? (see Vasari.)

X.

There stands the Master Study, my friends,
 What a man's work comes to ! So he plans it,
 Performs it, perfects it, makes amends
 For the toiling and moiling, and then, *sic transit* !
 Happier the thrifty blind folk labour,
 With upturned eye while the hand is busy,
 Not sidling a glance at the coin of their neighbour !
 'T is looking downward that makes one dizzy

XI

" If you knew their work you would deal your dole "
 May I take upon me to instruct you ?
 When Greek Art ran and reached the goal,
 Thus much had the world to boast *in fructu*—
 The Truth of Man, as by God first spoken,
 Which the actual generations gurple,
 Was re uttered, and soul (which Limbs betoken)
 And Limbs (Soul informs) made new in marble.

XII

So, you saw yourself as you wished you were,
 As you might have been, as you cannot be ;
 Earth here, rebuked by Olympus there :
 And grew content in your poor degree
 With your little power, by those statues' godhead,
 And your little scope, by their eyes' full sway,
 And your little grace, by their grace embodied,
 And your little date, by their forms that stay.

XIII

You would fain be kinglier, say, than I am ?
 Even so, you will not sit like Theseus
 You would prove a model ? The Son of Priam
 Has yet the advantage in arm ' and knees use
 You 're wroth — can you slay your make like Apollo ?
 You 're grieved — still Niobe 's the grander !
 You live — there 's the Rivers' maze to follow
 You die — there 's the dying, Alexander

XIV

So, testing your weakness by their strength,
 Your meagre charms by their rounded beauty,
 Measured by Art in your breadth and length,
 You learned — to submit is a mortal's duty
 — When I say "you" 't is the common soul,
 The collective, I mean the race of Man
 That receives life in parts to live in a whole,
 And grow here according to God's clear plan

XV

Growth came when, looking your list on them all,
 You turned your eyes inwardly one fine day
 And cried with a start — What if we so small
 Be greater and grander the while than they ?
 Are they perfect of lineament perfect of stature ?
 In both, of such lower types are we
 Precisely, because of our wider nature,
 For time, theirs — ours, for eternity.

XVI.

To day's brief passion limits their range ;
 It seethes with the morrow for us and more.
 They are perfect—how else ? they shall never change :
 We are faulty—why not ? we have time in store
 The Artificer's hand is not arrested
 With us, we are rough hewn no wise polished :
 They stand for our copy, and, once imitated
 With all they can teach, we shall see them abolished.

XVII

It is a life long toil till our lump be leavened—
 The better ! What's come to perfection perishes
 Things learned on earth, we shall practise in heaven .
 Works done least rapidly, Art most cherishes
 Thyself shalt afford the example, Giotto !
 Thy one work, not to decrease or diminish,
 Done at a stroke, was just (was it not ?) " Q !"
 Thy great Campanile is still to finish

XVIII

Is it true that we are now, and shall be hereafter,
 But what and where depend on life's minutes ?
 Hails heavenly cheer or infernal laughter
 Our first step out of the gulf or in it ?
 Shall Man, such step within his endeavour,
 Man's fate, have no more play and action
 Than joy which is crystallized for ever,
 Or grief, an eternal petrification ?

XIX.

On which I conclude, that the early painters,
 To cries of "Greek Art and what more wish you?"—
 Replied, "To become now self-acquainters,
 "And paint man, man, whatever the issue!
 "Make new hopes shine through the flesh they fray,
 "New fears aggrandise the rags and tatters:
 "To bring the invisible full into play!
 "Let the visible go to the dogs—what matters?"

XX.

Give these, I exhort you, their guerdon and glory
 For daring so much, before they well did it.
 The first of the new, in our race's story,
 Beats the last of the old; 't is no idle quiddit.
 The worthies began a revolution,
 Which if on earth you intend to acknowledge,
 Why, honour them now! (ends my allocution)
 Not confer your degree when the folks leave college.

XXI.

There's a fancy some lean to and others hate—
 That when this life is ended, begins
 New work for the soul in another state,
 Where it strives and gets weary, loses and wins
 Where the strong and the weak, this world's congeries
 Repeat in large what they practised in small;
 Through life after life in unlimited series;
 Only the scale 's to be changed, that 's all.

XXII.

Yet I hardly know When a soul has¹ seen
By the means of Evil that Good is best,
And, through earth and its noise, what is heaven's
science,—

When our faith in the same has stood the test—
Why, the child grown in us, you burn the rod,
The uses of labour are surely done,
There remaineth a test for the people of God :
And I have had troubles enough, for one.

XXIII.

But at any rate I have loved the season
Of Art's spring, birth so dim and dewy ;
My sculptor is Nicolo the Pisani,
My painter— who but Cimabue ?
Nor ever was man of them all indeed,
From these to Ghiberti and Ghulandajo,
Could say that he missed my critic meed.
So, now to my special grievance—high ho !

XXIV.

Their ghosts still stand, as I said before,
Watching each fresco flaked and rasped,
Blocked up, knocked out, or whitewashed o'er ;
—No getting again what the church has grasped !
The works on the wall must take their chance ;
“ Works never conceded to England's thick climate ! ”
— (I hope they prefer then inheritance
Of a bucketful of Italian quick-lime.)

XXV.

When they go at length, with such a shaking
 Of heads o'er the old delusion, sadly
 Each master his way through the black streets taking,
 Where many a lost work breathes though badly—
 Why don't they bethink them of who has merited?
 Why not reveal, while their pictures die
 Such doom, how a captive might be out-frieted?
 Why is it they never remember me?

XXVI.

Not that I expect the great Bigordi,
 Nor Sandro to hear me, chivalric, bellicose,
 Nor the wronged Lipponio, and not a word I
 Say of a scrap of Fid' Angelo's.
 But are you too fine, Taddeo Gaddi,
 To grant me a taste of your intonaco,
 Some Jerome that seeks the heaven with a sad eye?
 Not a churlish saint, Lorenzo Monaco?

XXVII.

Could not the ghost with the close red cap,
 My Pollajolo, the twice a craftsman,
 Save me a sample, give me the hip
 Of a muscular Christ that shows the draughtsman?
 No Virgin by him the somewhat petty,
 Of final touch and tempera crumbly—
 Could not Alesso Baldovinetti
 Contribute so much, I ask him humbly?

XXVIII

Margheritone of Arczzo,

With the grave clothes gub and swaddling barret

(Why purse up mouth and beak in a pet so,

You buld old saturnal poll-clawed parrot?)

Not a poor glimmering Cuccifixion,

Where in the foreground kneels the donor?

If such remain, as is my collection,

The hounding it does you but little honour.

XXIX

They pass, for them the pencil may thrill,

The tempera grow alive and tingly,

Their pictures are left to the mercies still

Of dealers and stealers—Jews and the English

Who, seeing, mere money's worth in their prize,

Will sell it to somebody calm as Zeno

At naked High Art, and in ecstasies

Before some clay cold vile Carl no!

XXX

No matter for these! But Giotto, you,

Have you allowed, as the town tongues babble of, —

Oh, never! it shall not be counted true—

That a certain precious little table

Which Buonarroti eyed like a lover,—

Was buried so long in oblivion's womb

And, left for another than I to discover,

Turns up at last! and to whom?—to whom?

XXXI.

I, that have hunted the dim San Spirito,
 (Or was it rather the Ognissanti?)
 Patient on altar-step planting a weary toe!
 Nay, I shall have it yet! *Detur amanti!*
 My Koh-i-noor — or (if that's a platitude)
 Jewel of Gimmichid, the Persian Soli's eye;
 So, in anticipative attitude,
 What if I take up my hope and prophesy?

XXXII

When the hour grows ripe, and a certain dotard
 Is pitched, no need of it need invoking,
 To the worse side of the Mont St Gothard,
 We shall begin by way of rejoicing,
 None of that beaten the ky (blank cartridge),
 Nor a civic guard, all plumes and haquer,
 Hunting Radetzky's soul like a partridge
 Over Morello with squib and cracker.

XXXIII

This time we'll shoot better game and bag 'em hot—
 No mere display at the stone of Dante,
 But a kind of sober Wit in the mot
 (Ex: "Casa Guich," *quod est est ent*)
 Shall ponder, once Freedom restored to Florence,
 How Art may return that departed with her.
 Conspired house, go each trace of the Loraine's,
 And bring us the days of Orgagna hither!

XXIV.

How we shall prologuize, how we shall perorate,
 Utter fit things upon art and history,
 Feel truth at blood heat and falsehood at zero rate,
 Make of the want of the age no mystery;
 Contrast the fructuous and sterile eras,
 Show—monarchy ever it, uncouth cub licks—
 Out of the bear's shape into Chimæra's,
 While Pure Art's birth is still the republic's,

XXV.

Then one shall propose in a speech (court Tuscan,
 Expurgate and sober, with curcely an "*assino*,")
 To end now our halt told tale of Cambuscan,
 And turn the bell tower's *ill* to *altissimo*:
 And fine as the beak of a young beccaccia
 The Campanile, the Duomo's fit ally,
 Shall soar up in gold full fifty braccia,
 Completing Florence, as Florence, Italy.

XXVI.

Shall I be alive that morning the scaffold
 Is broken away, and the long pent fire,
 Like the golden hope of the world, unbaffled
 Springs from its sleep, and up goes the spire
 While "God and the People" plain for its motto,
 Thence the new tricolour flaps at the sky?
 At least to foresee that glory of Giotto
 And Florence together, the first and the last

"DE GUSTIBUS—"

I

YOUR ghost will wait, you lover of trees,
 (If our loves remain)
 In an English lane,
 By a cornfield side a-flutter with poppies.
 Hark, those two in the hazel coppice—
 A boy and a girl, if the good fates please,
 Making love, say,
 The happier they !
 Draw yourself up from the light of the moon,
 And let them pass, as they will too soon,
 With the buttercups' boon,
 And the blackbird's tune,
 And May, and June !

II

What I love best in all the world
 Is a castle, precipice encircled,
 In a gash of the wind-grieved Apennine
 Or look for me, old fellow of mine,
 (If I get my head from out the mouth
 O' the grave, and loose my spirit's bands,
 And come again to the land of lands)—
 In a sea-side house to the farther South,
 Where the baked cicada dies of drouth.

And one sharp tree - 't is a cypress--stands,
 By the many hundred years red rusted,
 Rough non spoiled ripe fruit overmisted,
 My scumel to milt the and
 To the water set c l on white p d
 Before the h o c t l t o p m
 Ble l t l t h c f a l t a s
 While m t l l a t c m b l
 Son c l a n t t t l
 F r n l h t v a t l o n j a c t s
 A n l b r t t l m t m b e
 D o n o t t l t c e f e h m e n
 A l l w t t t l y t l n
 W a l h o t t o c e d m t l e w i n g,
 G o t t a J a n n a m m a l n g
 - S t e l j t t y l v e o r c m g h t t h e f e l o n a
 I t u y, m y l
 Q u e e n M a r y s y n g e i v e s f o r m e -
 (W h e n t i t n e s m l i e e
 I o s t h a t c a l u s)
 O p e n m y h e a r t a n d y o u w i l l s e e
 G r a v e d i n i d e o f i t ' I t a l y '
 S u c h l o v e r o l d m e I a n d s h e
 S o i t a l w a y s w a s s o s h a l l e v e r b e l

HOME THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD.

I

Out to hear the lark
Now the April ether
And the cuckoo's note
See the sun's rays
But the owls and the hush voice
Piercing the hush
And the hush voice
And the hush voice

I

At the white daisies
Hark, where my lark
Flies to the field
Drops and dew drops
That the wise thrush
Test you should think
The first time
And though the fields
All will be gay
The buttercups, the little
- Far brighter than this

HOME-THOUGHTS. FROM 'THE SEA.

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the North-West
 died away ;
 Sunset ran, one glorious blood red, reeking into Cadiz
 Bay ,
 Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay
 In the dimmest North East distance dawned Gibraltar
 grand and gray ,
 " Here and here did England help me : how can I help
 England ? " - say,
 Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise
 and pray,
 While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa

SAUL.

SAID Abner, " At last thou art come ! Ere I tell, ' ere
 thou speak,
 " Kiss my check, wish me well ! " Then I wished it, and
 did kiss his check.
 And he, " Since the King, O my friend, for thy coun-
 tenance sent,
 " Neither drunken nor eaten have we ; nor until from his
 tent

"Thou return with the joyful assurance the King liveth
 yet,
 "Shall our lip with the honey be bright, with the water be
 wet.
 "For out of the black mid-tent's silence, a space of three
 days,
 "Not a sound hath escaped to thy servants, of prayer nor
 of praise,
 "To betoken that Saul and the Spirit have ended their
 strife,
 "And that, faint in his triumph, the monarch sinks back
 upon life.

II.

"Yet now my heart leaps, O beloved! God's child with
 his dew
 "On thy gracious gold hair, and those lilies still living
 and blue
 "Just broken to twine round thy harp-strings, as if no
 wild heat
 "Were now raging to torture the desert!"

III.

Then I, as was meet,
 Knelt down to the God of my fathers, and rose on my
 feet,
 And ran over the sand burnt to powder. The tent was
 unlooped;
 I pulled up the spear that obstructed, and under I
 stooped;

Hands and knees on the slippery grass-patch, all withered
 and gone, *
 That extends to the second enclosure, I groped my
 way on
 Till I felt where the fold-knits fly open. Then once
 more I prayed,
 And opened the fold-knit, and entered, and was not
 afraid
 But spoke, "Here is David, thy servant!" And no
 voice replied.
 At the first I saw nought but the blackness; but soon I
 descried
 A something more black than the blackness—the vast,
 the uplight
 Main prop which sustains the pavilion: and slow into
 sight
 Grew a figure against it, gigantic and blackest of all.
 Then a sunbeam, that burst thro' the tent-roof, showed
 Soul.

IV

He stood as erect as that tent prop, both arms stretched
 out wide
 On the great cross support in the centre, that goes to
 each side;
 He relaxed not a muscle, but hung there as, caught in
 his pangs
 . And waiting his change, the king serpent all heavily
 hangs,

Far away from his kind, in the pine, till deliverance come
With the spring time,—so agonized soul, dead and stark,
blind and dumb

v

Then I tuned my harp, —took off the lilies we twine
round its chords
Lest they snap 'neath the stress of the noonade —those
sunbeams, like sword, !
And I first played the tune all our sheep know, as, one
after one,
So docile they come to the pen door till folding, be done
They are white and untorn by the bristles, for lo they
have fed
Where the long grasses still the water within the stream's
bed,
And now one after one seeks its lodging, and then follows
tu
Into eve and the blue firm above it, — o blue and so far!

vi

—Then the tune, for which quiet on the cornland will
catch as birds mate
To fly after the player, then what makes the crickets
chide
Till for boldness they fight one another and then, what
has weight
To set the quick jerboa a musing outside his sand house—
There are none such as he for a wonder, half bird and
half mouse !

God made all the creatures and gave them our love and
 our fear,
 To give sign, we and they are his children, one family here.

VII

Then I played the help tune of our reapers, their wine-
 song, when hand
 Grasps at hand, eye lights eye in good friendship, and
 great hearts expand
 And grow one in the sense of this world's life.—And
 then, the last song
 When the dead man is praised on his journey—"Beu
 be ar him along
 "With his few faults shut up like dead flowers, Are
 balm seeds not here
 "To console us? The land his none left such as he on
 the hill
 "Oh, would we might keep thee, my brother!"—And
 then, the glad chaunt
 Of the marriage,—first go the young maidens, next, she
 whom we vaunt
 As the beauty, the pride of our dwelling.—And then, the
 great march
 Wherein man runs to man to assist him and buttress an
 arch
 Nought can break; who shall harm them, our friends?—
 Then, the chorus intoned
 As the levites go up to the altar in glory emborned.
 But I stopped here: for here in the darkness Saul groaned.

VIII

And I paused, held my breath in such silence, and
 listened apace,
 And the tent shook, for mighty Saul shuddered, and
 purpled 'gan dart
 From the jewels that woke in his turban at once with a
 start
 All its lordly male-sapphires, and rubies courageous at
 heart
 So the head: but the body still moved not, still hung
 there erect
 And I bent once again to my flying, pursued it un-
 checked,
 As I sang,—

IX

“ Oh, our manhood's prime vigour! No
 spirit feels waste,
 “ Not a muscle is stopped in its playing nor sinew un-
 braced
 “ Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping, from rock up
 to rock.
 “ The strong rending of boughs from the tree, the
 cool silver shock
 “ Of the plunge in a pool's living water, the hunt of the
 bear,
 “ And the saltiness showing the lion is couched in his
 lair.

- " And the meal, the rich dates yellowed over with gold
dust divine, "
- " And the locust flesh steeped in the pitcher, the full
draught of wine,
- " And the sleep in the dried river channel where bulrushes
tell
- " That the water was wont to go warbling so softly and
well
- " How good it seems like the mere living ! how fit to
employ
- " All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy !
- " Hast thou loved the white locks of thy father, whose
sword thou didst guard
- " When he trusted thee forth with the armies, for glorious
reward ?
- " Didst thou see the thin hands of thy mother, held up as
men sung
- " The low song of the nearly departed, and hear her faint
tongue
- " Joining in while it could to the witness, ' Let one more
attest,
- " ' I have lived, seen God's hand thro' a lifetime, and all
was for best ! ' "
- " Then they sung thro' their tears in strong triumph, not
much, but the rest !
- " And thy brothers, the help and the contest, the working
whence grew
- " Such result as, from seething grape-bunches, the spirit
strained true ;

- " And the friends of thy boyhood—that boyhood of
wonder and hope,
" Present promise and wealth of the future beyond the
eye's scope, —
" Till lo, thou art grown to a monarch, a people is thine,
" And all gifts, which the world offers singly, on one head
conbine !
" On one head, all the beauty and strength, love and rage
(like the three
" That, a work in the rock, hurls us labour and lets the
gold go)
" High ambition and deeds which surpass it, tame
crowning them all
" Brought to blaze on the head of one creature —King
Saul !"

x

And lo, with that leap of my spirit —heart, hand, hap
and voice,
Each lifting Saul's name out of sorrow each bidding
rejoice
Saul's fame, in the light it was made for —as when, dare I
say
The Lord's army, in rapture of service, strains through
its way
And upspareth the cherubim in mot—" Saul !" cried I,
and stopped,
And waited the thing that should follow Then Saul,
who hung propped

By the tent's cross-support in the centre, was struck by
his name "a

Have ye seen when Spring's anowy summons goes right
to the um,

And some mount in the list to withstand her, that held
(h) alone.

While the vale laughed in freedom and flowers) on a
broad bust of stone

A year's snow bound about for a breastplate,—leaves
grasp of the sheet?

Fold on told all at once it crowds thunderously down to his feet

And there fronts you tall black but alive yet, your
mountain of old.

With his rents the successive beautiful things of ages untold—

Yea, each harm, not in fighting your battles, each furrow
and scar

Of his head thrust twixt you and the tempest—all hail,
there they are!

← Now again to be softened with verdure, again hold the
nest

Of the dove, tempt the goat and its young to the green
on his crest

For their food in the ardours of summer, One long
shudder thrilled

All the tent till the very air tingled, then sank and was stilled

At the King's self left standing before me, released and aware.

XI.

What spell or what charm,
(For, awhile there was trouble within me) what next
should I urge
To sustain him where song had restored him?—Song
filled to the verge
His cup with the wine of this life, pressing all that it
yields
Of mirth and the strength and the beauty: beyond
on what fields,

Glean a vintage more potent and perfect to brighten
the eye

And bring blood to the lip, and commend them the cup
they put by?

He saith, "It is good," still he drinks not: he lets me
pause life,

Gives assent, yet would die for his own part.

XII

The fancies grew rife

Which had come long ago on the pasture, when round
in the sheep

Fed in silence above, the one circle wheeled slow as an
loop,

And I lay in my hollow and mused on the world that
might lie

'Neath his ken, though I saw but the strip 'twixt the
hill and the sky:

And I laughed "Since my days are ordained to be
filled with my flocks,

"Let me people at least, with my fancies, the plains and
the rocks,

"Dream the life I am never to mix with, and image the
show

"Of mankind as they live in those fashions I hardly shall
know!

"Schemes of life, its best rules and right uses, the
courage that gains,

"And the prudence that keeps what men strive for."
And now these old trains

- " Leave the flesh to the fate it was fit for ! the spirit be
thine !
- " By the spirit, when age shall o'ercome thee, thou still
shalt enjoy
- " More indeed, than at first when unconscious, the life of
a boy
- " Crush that life, and behold its wine running ! Each
deed thou hast done
- " Dies, revives, goes to work in the world, until e'en is
the sin
- " Looking down on the world with clouds spot' him,
thou hast a picture,
- " Can find nothing his own ! I produced not, must
everywhere trace
- " The results of his past summer game, —so, each ray of
thy will,
- " Every flash of thy passion and prowess, long over, shall
thrust
- " Thy whole people the countless with ardour, till they
too give forth
- " A like cheer to their sons, who in turn, fill the South
and the North
- " With the radiance thy deed was the germ of. Carouse
in the past !
- " But the license of age has its limit ; thou diest at
last
- " As the lion when age dims his eyeball, the rose at her
height,
- " So with man—so his power and his beauty for ever
take flight.

- ' No! Again a long draught of my soul-wine! Look
forth o'er the years!
- " Thou hast done now with eyes for the actual; begin
with the seer's
- " Is Saul dead? In the depth of the vale make his tomb
—bid us
- " A grey mountain of mable heaped foun square, till,
built to the skies,
- " Let it mark where the great Fast King slumbers:
whose fame would ye know?
- " Up above see the rock's naked face, where the record
shall go
- " In great characters cut by the scribe,—Such was Saul,
so he did,
- " With the sages directing the work, by the populace
chid,—
- " For not half, they'll affirm, is compared there! Which
fault to amend,
- " In the grove with his kind grow the cedar, whereon
they shall spend
- " (See, in tablets 't is level before them) their praise
and record
- " With the gold of the graven, Saul's story,—the states-
man's great word
- " Side by side with the poet's sweet comment. The
river's away
- " With smooth paper-reeds graving, each other when
prophet winds rave:
- " So the pen gives unborn generations their due and
then put

"In thy being! Then, first of the mighty, thank God
that thou art!"

XIV

And behold while I saw, but O Thou who didst grant
me that day,

And before it not seldom hast granted thy help to
carry

Carry on and complete my adventure, —my shield and
my sword

In that act where my soul was thy servant thy word was
my word

Still be with me, who thine at the summit of human
endeavour

And scaling the highest mountain thou'lt could, gazed
hopelessly

On the new stretch of heaven above me — till, mighty to
save

Just one lift of thy hand cleared that distance — God's
throne from man's grave!

Let me tell out my tale to the dwelling — my voice to my
home

Which can scarce due believe in what marvels last night
I took part,

As this morning I gather the fragments, alone with my
sheep

And still fear lest the terrible glory⁴ vanish like
sleep!

For I wake in the grey dewy covert, while Hebron
upheaves

The dawn struggling with night on his shoulder, and
 • Kidron retrieves
 Slow the damage of yesterday's sunshine

XV

While I sang thus, assuring the monarch, and ever more strong
Made a proffer of good to console him—he slowly resumed
His old motions and habitudes calmly—The right hand replumed
His black locks to their wonted compromise, adjusted the swathes
Of his turban, and sec—the huge sweat that his countenance bathes,
He wipes off with the robe, and he said, now his loins
Are of yore,
And feels slow for the armlet of noon, with the clasp set before
He is Saul, ye remember me glory,—ere or had bent
The broad brow from the daily communion, and still, though much spent
Be the life and the bearing, that front you the same, God did choose,
To receive what a man may waste, deplete, never quite lose
So sank he along by the tent prop till, stayed by the pile

Of his armour and war-cloak and garments, he leaned
there awhile
And sat out my singing,—one arm round the tent-prop,
to ruse
His bent head, and the other hung slack—till I touched
on the pruce
I foresaw from ill in n in ill time, to the man patient
there,
And thus caded, the hup filling, forward Then first I
was ware
That he sat as I say, with my head just above his vast
knees
Which were thrust out on each side round me, like oak
roots which please
To encircle a limb when it slumbers. I looked up to
know
If the best I could do had brought solace he spoke
not but slow
Lifted up the hand slack at his side, till he laid it with care
Soft and grave, but in mild settled will, on my brow
in my hur
The huge fingers were pushed, and he bent back my
head, with kind power—
All my face buck intent to pause it, as men do
flower
Thus held he me there with his great eyes that scruti-
nized mine—
And oh, all my heart how it loved him! but where was
the sign?

" Do I task any faculty highest, to image success ?

" I but open my eyes,—and perfection, no more and no
less,

" In the kind I imagined, full fronts me, and God¹ is seen
God¹

" In the stu, in the stone in the flesh, in the soul and
the clod

" And thus looking, within and around me, I ever renew

" (With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises
it too)

" The submission of man nothing perfect to God's all
complete,

" As, by each new obedience in spirit, I climb to his
feet,

" Yet with all this bounding, experience, this deity
known,

" I shall dare to discover some province some gift of my
own

" There's a faculty pleasant to exercise, hard¹ to hood
wink,

" I am fain to keep still in abeyance, (I laugh as I
think)

" Lest, insisting to claim and parade in it, ~~wot~~ ^{be} I
wot

" Even the Giver in one gift Behold, I ~~could~~ ^{might} love if
I durst¹

" But I sink the pretension as fearing¹ ~~a man~~ ^{that} may
overtake

" God's own speed in the one way of love, I ~~abstain~~ ^{aim} for
love's sake,

"—What, my soul? see thus far and no farther? when
doors great and small,

"Nine-and-ninety flew ope at our touch, should the
hundredth appal?

"In the least things have faith, yet distrust in the
greatest of all?

"Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate
gift,

"That I doubt his own love can compete with it?
Here the puts list?

"Here, the creature surpass the Creator the end, what
Be in?

"Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for this
in n,

"And dare doubt he alone shall not help him, who yet
alone can?

"Would it ever have entered my mind, the bare will,
much less power,

"To bestow on this Soul what is of the marvellous
dower

"Of the life he was gifted, and filled with? to make such
a soul

"Such a body, and then such a truth for inspiring
the whole?

"And doth it not enter in mind (as my warm tears
attest)

"These good things being given, to go on, and give one
more, the best?

"Ay, to save and redeem and restore him, maintain at
the height

" This perfection,—succeed with life's dayspring, death's
minute of night ?

" Interpose at the difficult minute, snatch Saul, the
mistake,

" Saul, the future, the ruin he seems now,—and bid him
wake

" From the dream, the probation, the prelude, to find
himself set

" Clear and sure in new bent and new life,—a new
harmony yet

" To be run and continued, and ended—who knows ?
—on cadence !

" The man taught enough by life's dream, of the rest to
make sure,

" By the punishment, triumphantly winning intensified
bliss,

" And the next world's reward and repose, by the
struggle is in this

VIII

" I believe it ! 'T is thou, God, that givest, 't is I who
receive :

" In the last is the last, in thy will is my power to
believe.

" All's one gift thou canst grant it moreover, as prompt
to my prayer .

" As I breathe out this breath, as I open these arms to
the air.

" From thy will, stream the worlds, life and nature, thy
dread Sabaoth !

- " I will ?—the mere atoms despise me ! Why am I not
loth
- " To look that, even that in the face too ? Why is it I
dare
- " Think but lightly of such impuissance ? What stops
my despair ?
- " This ; —'t is not what man Does which exalts him, but
what man Would do !
- " See the King—I would help him but cannot, the
wishes fall through.
- " Could I wrestle to raise him from sorrow, grow poor to
emich,
- " To fill up his life, starve my own out, I would—
knowing which,
- " I know that my service is perfect. Oh, speak through
me now !
- " Would I suffer for him that I love ? So wouldst thou
—so wilt thou !
- " So shall crown thee the topmost mettablest, uttermost
crown —
- " And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor leave up nor down
- " One spot for the creature to stand in ' It is by no
breath,
- " Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation joins issue
with death '
- " As thy Love is discovered almighty, almighty be
proved
- " Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being
Beloved !

"He who did most, shall bear most; the strongest shall
stand the next weak.

"'T is the weakness in strength, that I cry for! my flesh,
that I seek

"In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it
shall be

"A Face like my face that receives thee, a Man like to
me,

"Thou shalt love and be loved by, for ever: a Hand
like this hand

"Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See
the Christ stand!"

VIX

I know not too well how I found my way home in the
night.

There were witnesses, cohorts about me, to left and to
right,

Angels, powers, the unuttered, unseen, the alive, the
wreath

I repressed, I got through them as hardly, as strugglingly
there,

As a runner beset by the populace furnished for news
Life or death. The whole earth was awakened, hell
loosed with her crews;

And the stars of night beat with emotion, and tingled
and shot

Out in fire the strong pain of pent knowledge: but I
fainted not,

For the Hand still impelled me at once and supported,
 • suppress d

All the tumult, and quenched it with quiet, and holy
best,

Till the rapture was shewn in itself, and the earth sank to rest.

Anon at the dawn, all that trouble had withered from
earth -

Not so much, but I saw it die out in the day's tender
 • bath.

In the gathered intensity brought to the grey of the hills,
In the shuddering forests' head bre th, in the sudden
wind thull

In the startled wild beasts that bore oft, each with eye
 gliding still

Though averted with wonder and dread, in the birds,
stiff and chill

That rose heavily, as I approached them, made stupid
with awe

Even the serpent that slid away silent—he felt the new
J. S.

The same stared in the white humid faces upturned by
the flowers,

The same, worked in the heart of the reader and moved
the vine bowers.

And the little brooks witnessing murmured, persistent
and low,

With their obstinate, all but hushed voices--"E'en so, it
is so!"

MY STAR.

All that I know
 Of a certain star
 Is, it can throw
 (Like the mailed spur)
 Now a dart of red,
 Now a dart of blue ;
 Till my friends have said
 They would fain see, too.
 My star that dutes the red and the blue !
 Then it stops like a bird, like a flower, hangs furled :
 They must solve themselves with the Saturn above it.
 What matter to me if their star is a world ?
 Mine has opened its soul to me, therefore I love it.

BY THE FIRE-SIDE.

How well I know what I mean to do
 When the long dark autumn evenings come ;
 And where, my soul, is thy pleasant hue ?
 With the music of all thy voices, dumb
 In life's November too !

II

I shall be found by the fire, suppose,
 Or a great wise book as becometh age,
 While the shutters flap as the cold wind blows,
 And I turn the page, and I turn the page,
 Not verse now, only prose !

III

'Till the young ones whisper, finger on lip,
 " There he is at it, deep in Greek
 " Now then, or never, out we slip
 " To cut from the hazel by the creek
 " A mammist for our ship !

IV

I shall be at it indeed, my friends !
 Greek puts already on either side
 Such a branch work forth as soon extends
 To a vista opening the world wide
 And I pass out where I will

V

'The outside frame, like your hazel trees —
 But the inside archway widens this,
 And a rarer sort succeeds to these
 And we slope to Italy at last
 And youth, by green degrees

VI

I follow wherever I am led,
 Knowing so well the leader's hand :

Oh woman country, wooed not wed,
 Loved all the more by earth's male lands,
 Laid to their hearts in teal!

VII

Look at the rumble of the glen
 Half way up in the Alpine gorge!
 Is that a tower of pentecost
 Or is it a mill or an iron fence
 Breaks solitude in vain?

VIII

A turn, and we stand in the heart of things;
 The woods are round us, heaved and dim,
 From slab to slab how it slips and springs,
 The thread of water, single and slim,
 Through the ravage some torrent brings!

IX

Does it feed the little lake below?
 That speck of white just on its marge
 Is Pella, see, in the evening glow,
 How sharp the silver spear-heads charge
 When Alp meets heaven in snow!

On our other side is the straight up rock;
 And a path is kept twist the gorge and it
 By boulder stone where lichens mock
 The marks on a moth, and small ferns fit
 Their teeth to the polished block.

XI

Oh the sense of the yellow mountain flowers,
And thorny balls, such three in one,
The chestnuts throw on our path in showers!
For the drop of the woodland fruit is begun,
These early November hours,

XII

That crimson the creepers leaf across
Like a splash of blood intense, abrupt
O'er a shield else old from rim to boss
And lay it for show on the fairy cupped
Elf-needed mat of moss

XIII

By the rose flesh mushroom, undivulged
Last evening new in to day's first d
Von sudden coral my pl bulged,
Where a fierked fawn coloured flaky cr v
Of toad-stools peep in lunged

XIV

And yonder, at foot of the frontage, the c
That takes the turn to a run e b yond
Is the chapel reached by the one nched bridge
Where the water is stopped in a stagnant pond
Danced over by the midge

XV

The chapel and bridge are of stone alike,
Blackish-grey and mostly wet,

Cut-hemp stalks steep in the narrow dyke—

See here again, how the lichens fret
And the roots of the ivy strike !

xvi

Poor little place, where its one priest comes

On a festal day, if he comes at all,
To the dozen folk from their scattered homes,
Gathered within that precinct small
By the dozen ways one town —

xvii

To drop from the charcoal burners' huts,
Or climb from the hemp dressers' low shed,
Leave the grange where the woodman stores his nuts,
Or the wattled cote where the fowlers spread
Their gear on the rocks bare juts.

xviii

It has some pretension too this front,
With its bit of fresco half moon wise
Set over the porch, Art's early wont :
'Tis John in the Desert, I surmise,
But has borne the weather's brunt—

xix

Not from the fault of the builder, though.
For a pent house properly projects
Where three carved beams make a 'certain show,
Dating—good thought of our architect's—
'Five, six, nine, he lets you know.

XX.

And all day long a bird sings there,
 And a stray sheep drinks at the pond at times ;
 The place is silent and aware ;
 It has had its scenes, its joys and crimes,
 But that is its own affair.

XXI

My perfect wife, my Leonor,
 Oh heart, my own. oh eyes, mine too,
 Whom else could I dare look backward for,
 With whom beside should I dare pursue
 The path grey heads abhor ?

XXII

For it leads to a crag's sheer edge with them ;
 Youth, flowery all the way, there stops—
 Not they ; age threatens and they condemn,
 Till they reach the gulf wherein youth drops,
 One inch from our life's safe hem !

XXIII

With me, youth led . . . I will speak now,
 No longer watch you as you sit
 Reading by fire-light, that great brow
 And the spirit-small hand propping it,
 Mutely, my heart knows how—

XXIV.

When, if I think but deep enough,
 You are wont to answer, prompt as rhyme ;

And you, too, find without rebuff
 Response your soul seeks many a time
 Piercing its fine flesh stuff

XXV

My own, confirm me ! If I tread
 This path back, is it not in pride
 To think how little I deemed it led
 To an all too blest that, by its side,
 Youth seems the waste instead ?

XXVI

My own, see where the veils conduct !
 At first, 't was something, our two souls
 Should mix as mist's do, each is sacked
 In each now - on, the new stream rolls,
 Whatever holds of strict

XXVII

Think, when our one soul understands
 The great Word which makes all things new,
 When earth breaks up and heaven expands,
 How will the change strike me and you
 In the house not made with hands ?

XXVIII

Oh I must feel your brain prompt mine,
 Your heart anticipate my heart,
 You must be just before in time,
 See and make me see, for your part,
 New depths of the divine !

XIX

But who could have expected this
When we two drew to either side
Just for the obvious triumph
To satisfy life duty then
With nothing left behind?

XX

Come back with me to the best of all,
Let us learn in how to be true,
Let us now forget the now and all
Break the rusty new century
And gather what we need!

XXI

What did I say? that I had sins
All day long, since I was born,
Of hawks from the very first to the last
Strained to a full moon and
You count the stars and

XXII

But at afternoon or night
I'm better, then the day
To the degree, you but be
It must get rid of what it
Its poison does so he

XXIII

Hither we walked then, side by side,
Arm in arm and cheek to cheek

And still I questioned or replied,
 While my heart, convulsed to really speak,
 Lay choking in its pride

XXXX

Silent the crumbling bridge we cross,
 And pity and praise the chapel sweet,
 And eue about the fustios loss,
 And wish for our souls a like retreat,
 And wonder at the moss

XXXX

Stoop and kneel on the settle under,
 Look through the windows grated square :
 Nothing to see ! I or fear of plunder,
 The cross is down and the altar bare,
 As if thieves don't fear thunder

XXXX

We stoop and look in through the grate,
 See the little porch and rustic door,
 Read duly the dead builder's date,
 Then cross the bridge that we crossed before,
 Take the path again—but wait !

XXXXVII

Oh moment, one and infinite !
 The water slips o'er stock and stone ;
 The West is tender, hardly bright :
 How grey at once is the evening grown—
 One star, its chrysolite !

XXXVIII.

We two stood there with never a third,
 But each by each, as each knew well :
 The sights we saw and the sounds we heard,
 The lights and the shades made up a spell
 Till the trouble grew and stirred

XXXIX

Oh, the little more, and how much it is !
 And the little less, and what worlds away !
 How a sound shall quicken content to bliss,
 Or a breath suspend the blood's best play,
 And life be a proof of this !

XI

Had she willed it, still had stood the screen
 So slight, so sure, 'twixt my love and her
 I could fix her face with a guard between,
 And find her soul as when friends confer,
 Friends—lovers that might have been

XII

For my heart had a touch of the woodland time,
 Wanting to sleep now over its best
 Shake the whole tree in the summer prime,
 But bring to the last leaf no such test !
 "Hold the last fast !" runs the rhyme.

XIII

For a chance to make your little much,
 To gain a lover and lose a friend,

Venture the tree and a myriad such,
 When nothing you may but the year can mend :
 But a last leaf—fear to touch !

XIII

Yet should it unfetch itself and fall
 Laddying down till it find your face
 At some slight wind—best chance of all !
 Be your heart henceforth its dwelling-place
 You trembled to foretell !

XIV

Worth how well, those dark grey eyes,
 That have so dark and dear, how worth
 That a man should strive and grieve,
 And taste a veriest hell on earth
 For the hope of such a prize !

XV

You might have turned and tried a man,
 Set him a space to weary and wear,
 And prove which suited more your plan,
 His best of hope or his worst despair,
 Yet end as he began

XVI

But you spared me this, like the heart you are,
 And filled my empty heart at a word,
 If two lives join, there is oft a scar,
 They are one and one, with a shadowy third ;
 One near one is too far

XLVII.

A moment after, and hands unseen
 Were hanging the night around us fast ;
 But we knew that a bar was broken between
 Life and life : we were mixed at last
 In spite of the mortal screen.

XLVIII.

The forests had done it ; there they stood ,
 We caught, for a moment the powers at play :
 They had mingled us so, for once and good,
 Their work was done - we might go or stay,
 They relapsed to their ancient mood

XLIX.

How the world is made for each of us ,
 How all we perceive and know in it
 Tends to some moment's product thus,
 When a soul declares itself - to wit,
 By its fruit, the thing it does '

L.

Be hate that fruit or love that fruit,
 It forwards the general deed of man
 And each of the Many helps to recruit
 The life of the race by a general plan ,
 Each living his own, to boot.

LI.

I am named and known by that moment's feat
 There, took my station and degree ;

So grew my own small life complete,
 As nature obtained her best of me—
 One born to love you, sweet !

III

And to watch you sink by the fire side now
 Back again, as you mutely sit
 Musing by fire light, that great brow
 And the spirit in ill hand propping it,
 Yonder, my heart knows how !

III.

So, earth has gained by one man the more,
 And the gain of earth must be heaven's gain too,
 And the whole is well worth thinking o'er
 When autumn comes, which I mean to do
 One day, as I said before

ANY WILL TO ANY HUSBAND.

I

My love, this is the bitterest, that thou—
 Who art all truth, and who dost love me now
 As thine eyes say, as thy voice breaks to say—
 Shouldst love so truly, and couldst love me still
 A whole long life through, had but love its will,
 Would death that leads me from thee brook delay.

II.

I have but ~~to be by~~ thee, and thy hand
Will never ~~let mine go~~, nor heart withstand
The beating of my heart to touch it, I'll see.
When shall I look for thee and feel thee gone?
When cry for the old comfort and find none?
Never, I know! Thy soul is in thy face

III.

Oh I should fade—'t is wiled so! Might I save,
Gladly I would, whatever beauty gave
Joy to thy sense, for that was precious too
It is not to be granted! Put the soul
Whence the love comes, all ravage leaves that whole,
Vainly the flesh fades, soul makes all things new

IV.

It would not be because my eye grew dim
Thou couldst not find the love 'thier, thanks to Him
Who never is dishonoured in the pain
He gave us from his fire of mercy and pain
Remember whence it springs, nor be afraid
While that burns on, thou hast the rest grow dark.

V.

So, how thou wouldst be perfect, white and clean
Outside ~~is~~ inside, soul and soul's demesne
Alike, this body given to show it by
Oh, through the worst of life's abyss,
What plagues from the next world after this,
Couldst thou repeat a stroke and gain the sky!

VI.

And is it not the bitterer to think
 That disengage our hands and thou wilt sink
 Although thy love was love in very deed ?
 I know that nature ! Pass a festive day,
 Thou dost not throw its relic flower away
 Nor bid its music's loitering echo speed.

VII

Thou let'st the stringer's glove lie where it fell ;
 If old things remain old things, this is well,
 For thou art grateful as becomes man best ;
 And hadst thou only heard me play one tune,
 Or viewed me from a window, not so soon
 With thee would such things fade as with the rest.

VIII

I seem to see ! We meet and part ; 't is brief ,
 The book I opened keeps a folded leaf,
 The very chain I sit on, breaks the rank ;
 That is a portrait of me on the wall--
 Three lines, my face comes at so slight a call :
 And for all this, one little hour to thank !

IX.

But now, because the hour through years was fixed,
 Because our inmost beings met and mixed,
 Because thou once hast loved me—wilt thou dare
 Say to thy soul and Who may list beside,
 Therefore she is immortally my bride ;
 " Chance cannot change my love, nor time impair.

“ So, what if in the dusk of life that’s left,
I, a tired traveller of my sun bereft,
Look from my path when, munnikin’ the same,
The fire fly glimpes past me, come and gone?
—Where was it till the sunset? where mon
It will be at the sunrise! What’s to blame?”

VI

Is it so helpful to thee? Canst thou take
The nunnie up, nor, for the true things sake,
Put gently by such efforts at a beam?
In the remainder of the way so long,
Thou need’st the little solace which the strong?
Watch out thy watch, let work ones doze and dream!

VII

— Ah, but the new her faces! Is it true,
Thou’lt tell me some eyes are beautiful and new?
So new — how can one choose but grasp such
wealth?

And if a man would press his lips to lip
“ Fresh as the wilding hedge rose cup their slips
“ The dew drop out of, must it be by stealth?”

VIII

“ It cannot change the love still kept for Her,
“ More than if such a picture I prefer
“ Passing a day with, to a room’s bare side.
“ The painted form takes nothing she possessed,
“ Yet, while the Titian’s Venus lies at rest,
“ A man looks. Once more, what is there to chide?”

xiv,

So must I see, from where I sit and watch,

My own self sell myself, my hand attach

Its warrant to the very thefts from me—

Thy singleness of soul that made me proud,

Thy purity of heart I loved aloud,

Thy man's truth I was bold to bid God see!

xv

Love so, then, if thou wilt! Give all thou canst

Away to the new faces—disenthralled,

(Say it and think it) of durite no more,

Re-issue looks and words from the old mint,

Press them afresh, no matter whose the print

Image and superscription once they bore!

xvi

Reclaim thyself and give it them to spend, —

It all comes to the same thing at the end,

Since mine thou wast, mine art and mine shalt be,

Faithful or faithless, scaling up the sum

Or lavish of my treasure, thou must come

Back to the heart's place here I keep for thee!

xvii

Only, why should it lie with him at all?

Why must I, 'twixt the leaves of coronal,

Put any kiss of pardon on thy brow?

Why need the other women know so much,

And talk together, "Such the look and such

The smile he used to love with, then as now!"

XVIII

Might I die last and show thee? Should I find
Such hardships in the few years left behind,
If free to take and light my lamp, and go
Into thy tomb, and shut the door and sit,
Seeing thy face on those four sides of it
The better that they are so blank I know?

XIX

Why time was what I wanted, to turn o'er
Within my mind each look, yet more and more
By heart each word, too much to learn at first,
And join thee all the latter for the first
Nearth the low doorway until that were cause
For lingering, though thou calledst, if I durst?

XX

And yet thou art the nobler of us two
What dare I dream of, that thou canst not do,
Outstripping my ten small steps with one stride?
I'll say then, here's a trial and a test
Is it to bear?—if easy, I'll not ask
Though love fail, I can trust thou in thy pride

XXI

Pride?—when those eyes foretell the life behind
The death I have to go through!—when I find,
Now that I want thy help most, all of thee!
What did I fear? Thy love will hold me fast
Until the little minute's sleep is past
And I wake saved.—And yet it will not be!

TWO IN THE CAMPAGNA.

I

I wonder do you feel to day
 As I have felt since, hand in hand,
 We sat down on the grass, to stray
 In spirit better through the land,
 This morn of Rome and May?

II

For me, I touched a thought, I know,
 Has troubled me many times,
 (Like turns of thread the spiders throw
 Mocking, across our path) for rhymes
 To catch at and let go.

III

Help me to hold it! First it left
 The yellowing funnel, run to seed
 There, branching from the brickwork's cleft,
 Some old tomb's ruin yonder weed
 Took up the floating welt,

IV

Where one small orange cup amassed
 Live beetles,—blind and green they grope
 Among the honey meal: and last,
 Everywhere on the grassy slope
 I traced it. Hold it fast!

v.

The ~~champaign~~ with its endless fleece
 Of ~~feathery~~ grasses everywhere !
 Silence and passion, joy and peace,
 • An everlasting wish of us —
 Rome's ghost into her decay

vi

Such life here, through such lengths of hours,
 Such miracles performed in play,
 Such, primal naked forms of flowers,
 Such letting nature have her way
 While heaven looks from its towers !

vii

How say you ? Let us O my dove,
 Let us be unshamed of soul,
 As earth lies true to heaven above !
 How is it under our control
 To love or not to love ?

viii

I would, that you were all to me,
 You that are just so much, no more
 , Nor yours nor mine, nor slave nor free !
 Where does the fault lie ? What the core
 O' the wound, since wound must be ?

ix

•
 I would I could adopt your will,
 See with your eyes, and set my heart
 •

Beating by yours, and drink my fill
 At your soul's springs,—you part, my part
 In life, for good and ill

No I yearn upward, touch you close,
 Then stand away I kiss your cheek,
 Catch your soul's warmth,— I pluck the rose
 And love it more than tongue can speak —
 Then the good minute goes

Mercy how am I so fain
 Out of that minute? Must I go
 Still like the thistle ball no bar,
 Onward, whenever light winds blow,
 Fixed by no friendly star?

Just when I seemed about to learn!
 Where is the thread now? Off again I,
 The old trick! Only I discern—
 Infinite passion, and the pain
 Of finite hearts that yearn

MISCONCEPTIONS.

I

THIS is a spray the Bird clung to,
 Making it blossom with pleasure,
 Ere the high tree-top she sprung to,
 Fit for her nest and her treasure
 Oh, what a hope beyond measure
 Was the poor spray's, which the flying feet hung to,—
 So to be singled out, built in, and sung to!

II

THIS is a heart the Queen lent on
 Thrilled in a minute ecstacy,
 Ere the true bosom she bent on,
 Meet for love's regal dramatic
 Oh, what a fancy ecstacy
 Was the poor heart's, ere the summer went on—
 Love to be saved for it, proffered to, spent on!

A SERENADE AT THE VILLA.

I

THAT was I, you heard last night
 When there rose no moon at all,

191
O, to pierce the strained air,
Tent of heaven, a planet strange,
Life was dead and so was light.

II.

Not a twinkle from the fly,
Not a glimmer from the worm.
When the crickets stopped their cry,
When the owls forbore a term,
You heard music, that was I.

III

Earth turned in her sleep with pain,
Sultrily suspirod for proof:
In at heaven and out again,
Lightning!—where it broke the roof
Bloodlike, some few drops of rain.

IV

What they could my words expressed,
O my love, my all, my one!
Singing helped the verses best,
And when singing's best was done
To my lute I left the rest.

V.

So wore night, the East was gray,
White the broad-faced hemlock
There would be another day:
Ere its first of heavy hours
Had me, I had passed away.

THE LATEST

VI.

What of all the hopes,
And song and lute as well?
"Struck you—" When life grope
For the path where fell
Lest last on the evening slopes

VII

My friend in that path shall be
To secure my step from wrong
Care to count night day for me
Patient through the watch long
Serving most with none to see

VIII

Never say—as something bodes—
The worst has yet a worst
For life halts 'neath double loads,
Better the task master's cause
Such music on the roads!

IX.

No moon succeeds the sun,
Can pierce the midnight's tent
The smallest one.
Some drops, where lightning rent,
The final storm begun—

X.

It hides its spot,
And voices fail

" In the darkness thick and hot,—
 " Shall another voice avail,
 " That shape be where these are not?

VI

" Has some plague a longer lease,
 " Proffering its help uncouth?
 " Can't one even die in peace?
 " As one shut, one's eyes on youth,
 " Is that face the last one sees?"

XII.

Oh how dark your villa was,
 Windows fast and obdurate!
 How the garden grudged me grass
 Where I stood—the iron gate
 Ground its teeth to let me pass!

ONE WAY OF LOVE.

I.

ALL June I bound the rose in sheaves.
 Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves
 And strew them where Pauline may pass.
 She will not turn aside? Alas!
 Let them lie. Suppose they die?
 The chance was they might take her eye.

II.

How many a month I strove to suit
 These stubborn fingers to the lute!

To-day I venture all I know
 She will not hear my music? So!
 Break the string, fold music's wing
 Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

III

My whole life long I learned to love
 This hour my utmost art I prove
 And speak my passion—heaven or hell?
 She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!
 Love who may—I still can say,
 Those who win heaven, blest are they!



ANOTHER WAY OF LOVE

I.

JUNE was not over
 Though past the full,
 And the best of her roses
 Had yet to blow,
 When a man I know
 (But shall not discover,
 Since ears are dull,
 And time discloses)
 Turned him and said with a man's true air,
 Half sighing a smile in a yawn, as 't were,—
 "If I tire of your June, will she greatly care?"

II.

Well, dear, in doors with you !

True ! serene deadness

Tries a man's temper.

What's in the blossom

June wears on her bosom ?

Can it cheer souls with you ?

Sweetness and redness,

Fadem semper !

Go, let me care for it gently or slightly !

If June mend her bower now your hand left unsightly

By plucking the rose,—my June will do rightly.

III

And after, for pastime,

If June be refulgent

With flowers in completeness,

All petals, no pickles,

Delicious as tickles

Of wine poured at miss time,—

And choose One indulgent

To redness and sweetness

Or if, with experience of man and of spider,

June use my June lightning the strong insect-rider,

And stop the fresh film work,—why, June will consider.

A PRETTY WOMAN.

I

THAT fawn skin dappled hair of hers,
And the blue eye
Dear and dewy,
And that infantine flush 'ur of hers !

II

To think men cannot take you, Sweet,
And enfold you,
Ay, and hold you,
And so keep you what they make you, Sweet !

III

You like us for a glance, you know—
For a word's sake
Or a sword's sake,
All's the same, whate'er the chance, you know.

IV

And in turn we make you ours, we say—
You and youth too,
Eyes and mouth too,
All the face composed of flowers, we say.

e

v.

All 's our own, to make the most of, Sweet—
 Sing and say for,
 Watch and pray for,
 Keep a secret or go boast of, Sweet!

vi

But for loving, why, you would not, Sweet,
 Though we prayed you,
 P aid you, brayed you
 In a mortu — for you could not, Sweet!

vii

So, we leave the sweet face fondly there :
 Be its beauty
 Its sole duty !
 Let all hope of grace beyond, lie there !

viii

And while the face lies quiet there,
 Who shall wonder
 That I ponder
 A conclusion ? I will try it there.

ix

As,— why must one, for the love foregone,
 Scout mere liking ?
 Thunder striking
 Earth,—the heaven, we looked above for, gone !

x

Why, with beauty, needs there money be,
 Love with liking ?
 Crush the fly king
 In his gauze, because no honey bee ?

xi

May not liking be so simple sweet,
 If love grew there
 'T wou 'l undo there
 All that breaks the cheek to dimples sweet ?

xii

Is the creature too imperfect, say ?
 Would you mend it
 And so end it ?
 Since not all addition perfects aye !

xiii

Or is it of its kind, perhaps,
 Just perfection—
 Whence, rejection
 Of a grace not to its mind, perhaps ?

xiv

Shall we burn up, tread that fire at once
 Into tinder,
 And so hinder
 Sparks from kindling all the place at once ?

XV

Or else kiss away one's soul on her?

Your love fancies!

—A sick man sees

Truer, when his hot eyes roll on her!

XVI

Thus the craft man thinks to grace the rose,—

Pluck, & mould flower

For his own flower,

Uses fine things that efface the rose.

XVII

Rosy rubies make its cup more rose,

Precious nettles

Ape the petals,—

Last, some old king locks it up, morose!

XVIII

Then how grace a rose? I know a way!

Leave it, rather

Must you gather?

Smell, kiss, wear it—at last, throw away!

RESPECTABILITY.

I.

DEAR, had the world in its caprice
 Deigned to proclaim "I know you both,
 "Have recognized your plighted troth,
 "Am sponsor for you 'live in peace'!"—
 How many precious months and years
 Of youth had passed, that speed so fast,
 Before we found it out at last,
 The world, and what it feeds us?

II

How much of priceless life were spent
 With men that every virtue decks,
 And women models of their sex,
 Society's true ornament,
 Ere we dared wander, nights like this,
 Thro' wind and rain, and with the Seine,
 And feel the Boulevard break agun
 To warmth and light and bliss?

III

I know! the world proscribes not love,
 Allows my finger to caress
 Your lips' contour and downiness,
 Provided it supply a glove.

The world's good word !—the Institute !

Guizot receives Montalembert ! o

Eh ? Down the court three lampions flare :

Put forward your best foot !

LOVE IN A LIFE.

I

Room after room,

I hunt the house through

We inhabit together.

Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt find her—

Next time, herself !—not the trouble behind her

Left in the curtain, the couch's perfume !

As she blushed it, the cornice-wreath blossomed anew :

Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave of her feather.

II

Yet the day wears,

And door succeeds door ;

I try the fresh fortune—

Range the wide house from the wing to the centre.

Still the same chance ! she goes out as I enter.

Spend my whole day in the quest,—who cares ?

But 't is twilight, you see,—with such suites to explore,

Such closets to search, such alcoves to importune !

' LIFE IN A LOVE.

ESCAPE me ?

Never—

Beloved !

While I am I, and you are you,

So long as the world contains us both,

Me the loving and you the loth,

While the one eludes, must the other pursue.

My life is a fault at last, I fear :

It seems too much like a fate, indeed !

Though I do my best I shall scarce succeed.

But what if I fail of my purpose here ?

It is but to keep the nerves at strain,

To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,

And baffled, get up and begin again,—

So the chase takes up one's life, that 's all.

While, look but once from your furthest bound

At me so deep in the dust and dark,

No sooner the old hope goes to ground

Than a new one, straight to the self same mark,

I shape me—

Ever

Removed !

IN THREE DAYS.

I.

So, I shall see her in three days
 And just one night, but nights are short,
 Then two long hours and that is more.
 See how I come unchanged, unworn !
 Feel, where my life broke off from time,
 How fresh the splinter keeps and fine,
 Only a touch and we combine !

II

Too long, this time of you, the days !
 But nights, at least the nights are short.
 As night show where her one moon is,
 A hand's breadth of pure light and bliss,
 So life's night gives my lady birth
 And my eyes hold her ! What is worth
 The rest of heaven, the rest of earth ?

III

O loaded curls, release your store
 Of warmth and scent, as once before,
 The tingling hair did, lights and dark
 Outbreaking into fury sparks,
 When under curl and curl I pried
 After the warmth and scent inside,

Thro' lights and darks how manifold—
The dark inspired, the light controlled !
As early Art embrowns the gold

IV

What great fear, should one say " Three days
" That change the world might change as well
" Your fortune, and if joy delay,
" Be happy that no worse befall !
What small fear, if another says,
" Three days, and one short night beside
" May throw no shadow on your ways,
" But years must teem with change untried,
" With chance not easily defied,
" With an end somewhere undescried "
No fear !—or if a fear be born
This minute, it die out in scorn
Fear? I shall see her in three days
And one night, now the night is short,
Then just two hours, and that is morn.

IN A YEAR.

I

NEVER any more,
While I live,
Need I hope to see his face
As before.

' Once his love grown chill
 Mine may strive :
 Bitterly we re-embrace,
 Single still.

II.

Was it something said,
 Something done,
 Vexed him ? was it touch of hand,
 Turn of head ?
 Strange ! that very way
 Love begun :
 I as little understand
 Love's decay.

III.

When I sewed or drew,
 I recall
 How he looked as if I sung,
 —Sweetly too.
 If I spoke a word,
 First of all
 Up his cheek the colour sprung,
 Then he heard.

IV.

Sitting by my side,
 At my feet,
 So he breathed but air I breathed
 Satisfied !

I, too, at love's brim
Touched the sweet
I would die if death bequeathed
Sweet to him

v

"Speak, I love thee best!"
He exclaimed
"Let thy love my own foretell!"
I confessed
"Clasp my heart on thine
"Now unblinded
"Since upon thy soul so well
"Hangeth mine!"

vi

Was it wrong to own,
Being truth?
Why should all the given love
His alone?
I had wealth and ease,
Beauty, youth
Since my lover gave me love,
I gave these

vii

That was all I meant,
—To be just,
And the passion I had raised,
To content

Since he chose to change
 Gold for dust,
 If I gave him what he praised
 Was it strange ?

VIII.

Would he loved me yet,
 On and on,
 While I found some way undreamed
 - Paid my debt !
 Gave more life and more,
 Till, all gone,
 He should smile "She never seemed
 " Mine before

IX.

" What, she felt the while,
 " Must I think ?
 " Love 's so different with us men !"
 He should smile
 " Dying for my sake - -
 " White and pink !
 " Can't we touch these bubbles then
 " But they break ?"

X

Dear, the pang is brief,
 Do thy part,
 Have thy pleasure ! How perplexed
 Grows belief !

Well, this cold clay clod
Was man's heart :
Crumble it, and what comes next ?
Is it God ?

— — — — —

WOMEN AND ROSES.

• L

I DREAM of a red-rose tree,
And which of its roses three
Is the dearest rose to me ?

II.

Round and round, like a dance of snow
In a dazzling drift, as its guardians, go
Floating the women faded for ages,
Sculptured in stone, on the poet's page
Then follow women fresh and gay,
Living and loving and loved to day,
Last, in the rear, flee the multitude of maidens,
Beauties yet unborn. And all, to one cadence,
They circle their rose on my rose tree.

• III

Dear rose, thy term is reached,
Thy leaf hangs loose and bleached :
Ites pass it unimpeached.

IV.

Stay then, stoop, since I cannot climb,
 You, great shapes of the antique time !
 How shall I fix you, fire you, freeze you,
 Break my heart at your feet to please you ?
 Oh, to possess and be possessed !
 Hearts that beat 'neath each pallid breast !
 Once but of love, the poetry, the passion,
 Drink but once and die !—In vain, the same fashion,
 They circle their rose on my rose tree .

V

Dear rose, thy joy 's undimmed
 Thy cup is ruby rimmed,
 Thy cup's heart nectar brimmed

VI

Deep, as drops from a statue's plinth
 The bee sucked in by the hyacinth,
 So will I bury me while burning,
 Quench like him at a plunge my yearning,
 Eyes in your eyes, lips on your lips !
 Fold me fast where the cincture slips,
 Prison all my soul in eternities of pleasure,
 Girdle me for once ! But no—the old measure,
 They circle their rose on my rose tree.

VII.

Dear rose without a thorn,
 Thy bud 's the babe unborn .
 First streak of a new morn.

VIII.

Wings, lend wings for the cold, the clear !
 What is far conquers what is near
 Roses will bloom nor wint beholders,
 Spring from the dust where our flesh moulders
 What shall arrive with the cycle's change ?
 A novel grace and a beauty strange
 I will make an Eve, be the artist that began her,
 Shaped her to his mind ! — Alas ! in like manner
 They circle their way on my rose tree.

BEFORE.

I

Let them fight it out, friend ! things have gone too far.
 God must judge the couple leave them as they are
 —Whichever one's the guiltless, to his glory,
 And whichever one the guilt's with, to my story !

II

Why, you would not bid men, sunk in such a slough,
 Strike no arm out further, stuck and stunk as now,
 Leaving right and wrong to settle the embroilment,
 Heaven with snaky hell, in torture and entoilment ?

III.

Who 's the culprit of them? How must he conceive
 God—the queen he caps to, laughing in his sleeve,
 “’T is but decent to profess oneself beneath her :
 “ Still, one must not be too much in earnest, either !”

IV.

Better sin the whole sin, sure that God observes ;
 ‘Then go live his life out !’ He will try his nerves,
 When the sky, which noticed all makes no disclosure,
 And the earth keeps up her temble composure.

V.

Let him pace at pleasure, past the walls of rose,
 Pluck then fruits when grape trees graze him as he goes !
 For he ’gins to guess the purpose of the garden,
 With the sly mute thing, beside there, for a warden.

VI.

What ’s the leopard dog thing, constant at his side,
 A leer and lie in every eye of its obsequious hide ?
 When will come an end to all the mock obsequance,
 And the price appear that pays for the misfeasance ?

VII.

So much for the culprit. Who ’s the martyred man ?
 Let him bear one stroke more, for be sure he can !
 He that strove thus evil’s lump with good to leaven,
 Let him give his blood at last and get his heaven !

VIII.

All or nothing, stake it ! Trusts he God or no ?
 Thus far and no farther ? farther ? be it so !
 Now, enough of your chicane of prudent pauses,
 Sage provisos, sub-intents and saving-clauses !

IX.

Ah, "forgive" you bid him ? While God's champion
 lives,
 Wrong shall be resisted : dead, why, he forgives.
 But you must not end my friend ere you begin him ;
 Evil stands not crowned on earth, while breath is in him.

X.

Once more—Will the wronger, at this last of all,
 Dare to say, "I did wrong," rising in his fall ?
 No ?—Let go, then ! Both the fighters to their places !
 While I count three, step you back as many paces !

AFTER.

TAKE the cloak from his face, and at first
 Let the corpse do its worst !
 How he lies in his rights of a man !
 Death has done all death can.
 And, absorbed in the new life he leads,

He reck not, he heeds
 Not his wrong nor my vengeance ; both strike
 On his senses alike,
 And are lost in the solemn and strange
 Surprise of the change

 Ha, what avails death to chase
 His offence, my disgrace ?
 I would we were boys as of old
 In the field, by the fold
 His outrage, God's patience, man's scorn
 Were so easily borne !

 I stand here now, he lies in his place :
 Cover the face !

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

A PICTURE AT LANO.

I

DEAR and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave,
 That child, when thou hast done with him, for me !
 Let me sit all the day here, that when eve
 Shall find performed thy special ministry,
 And time come for departure, thou, suspending
 Thy flight, may'st see another child for tending,
 Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

II

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,
 From where thou standest now, to where I gaze,
 — And suddenly my head is covered o'er
 With those wings, white above the child who prays
 Now on that tomb — and I shall feel thee guarding
 Me, out of all the world, for me, discarding
 Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes its door.

III.

I would not look up thither east thy head
 Because the door opes, like that child I know,
 For I should have thy gracious face instead,
 Thou bud of God ! — And wilt thou bend me low
 Like him, and lay like his my hands together,
 And lift them up to pray — and gently tether
 Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment — spread ?

IV

If this was ever granted I would rest
 My head beneath thine, while thy healing hands
 Close covered both my eyes be idle fast
 Pressing the brain which too much thought expands,
 Back to its proper size again — and smoothing
 Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
 And all lay quiet, happy and suppressed

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired !
 I think how I should view the earth and skies

And sea, when once again my brow was bared
 After thy healing, with such different eyes.
 O world, is God has made it! All is beauty:
 And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.
 What further may be sought for or declared?

VI

Guercino drew this angel for a teach
 (Alfred, dear friend!) that little child to play,
 Holding the little hand up each to each
 Pressed gently, with his own head turned away
 Over the earth where so much lay before him
 Of work to do, though heaven was opening o'er him,
 And he was left at Fano by the beach.

VII

We were at Laro, and three times we went
 To sit and catch him in his chapel there,
 And drink his beauty to our soul's content
 — My angel with me too — and since I care
 For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power
 And glory comes this picture for a dower,
 Fraught with a pathos so magnificent)

VIII

And since he did not work thus earnestly
 At all times, and has else endured ~~some wrong~~ —
 I took one thought his picture struck from me,
 And spread it out, translating it to song.

My love is here. Where are you, dear old friend?
How rolls the Wagon at your world's far end?
This is Ancona, yonder is the sea

MEMORABILIA.

I

AH, did you once see 'hilly pl'm,
And die 'he top and speak to you,
And did you speak to him again?
How strange ' seems and now!

II

But you were living before that,
And also you are living after,
And the memory I started at
My starting moves your daughter

III

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own
And a certain use in the world no doubt,
Yet a hand's breadth of richness alone
'Mid the blank miles round about.

IV

For there I picked up on the heather
And there I put inside my breast
A moulted feather, an eagle feather!
Well, I forget the rest.

POPULARITY.

I

STAND still, true poet that you are !

I know you , let me try and draw you.
Some night you 'll find us when afar

You ~~use~~ remember one man saw you,
Knew you, and named ~~the~~ star !

II

My star, God's glow worm ! Why extend
That loving hand of his which leads you,
Yet locks you safe from end to end

Of this dark world, unless he needs you,
Just save your light to spend ?

III

His clenched hand shall unclose at last,

I know, and let out all the beauty :

My poet holds the future fast,

Accepts the coming as s' duty,
Their present for this past.

IV

That day, the earth's feast master's ⁷brow
Shall clear, to God the chalice raising ;

" Others give best at first, but thou

" Forever set'st our table praising,

" Keep'st the good wine till now ! "

V

Meantime, I'll draw you as you stand,
 With few or none to watch and wonder.
 I'll say—a fisher on the sand
 By Tyre the old, with ocean plunder,
 A netful, brought to land

VI

Who has not heard how Lyones hells
 Enclosed the blue that dye of dyes
 Whereof one drop worked miracle,
 And coloured like Astarte's eyes
 Raw silk the merchant sell?

VII

And each bystander of them all
 Could criticize, and quote tradition
 How depths of blue sublimed soul pull
 —To get which, pricked the king's ambition,
 Worth sceptre, crown and land

VIII

Yet there's the die, in that rough mesh
 The sea has only just over whetted
 Live whelks, each lips level dipping fresh,
 As if they still the water's lip heard
 Though foam the rock weeds thresh

IX

Enough to furnish Solomon
 Such hangings for his cedar house,

That when gold robed he took the throne
 In that abyss of blue the Spouse
 Might swear his presence shone

x

Most like the centre spike of gold
 Which burn deep in the blue bell's womb
 What time, with ardours inifold,
 The bee goes singing to her room,
 Drunken and overblown

xi

Mere conchs! not fit for warp or woof!
 Till cunning come to pound and squeeze
 And clarify,—refine to a roof
 The liquor filtered by degrees,
 While the world stands aloof

i

xii

And there's the extract flaked and fine,
 And priced and palatable at last!
 And Hobbs, Nobbs Stokes and Nokes combine
 To punt the future from the past,
 Put blue into their line

xiii

Hobbs hints blue, straight he turtle eats;
 Nobbs prints blue,—claret crowns his cup.
 Nokes outdares Stokes in azure feats,—
 Both gorge. Who fished the murex up?
 What porridge had John Keats?

MASTER HUGUES OF SAXE-GOTHA.

I.

HIST, but a word, fair and soft !

Forth and be judg'd, Master Hugues !

Answer the question I've put you so oft :

What do you mean by your mountainous hugues ?

See, we're alone in the loft.—

II

I, the poor organist here,

Hugues, the composer of note,

Dead though, and done with, this many a year

Let's have a colloquy, something to note,

Make the world prick up its ear !

III

See, the church empties apace.

Fast they extinguish the lights,

Hallo there, sacristan ! Five minutes' grace

Here's a crank pedal wants setting to rights,

Baulks one of holding the base.

IV

See, our huge house of the sounds,

Hushing its hundreds at once,

Bids the last loiterer back to his bounds !

—O you may challenge them, not a response

Get the church-saints on their rounds !

V.

(Saints go their rounds, who shall doubt ?

—March, with the moon to admire,

Up nave, down chancel turn transept about,

Supervise all betwixt pavement and spire,

Put rats and mice to the rout—

VI

Aloys and Julien and Just —

Order things back to their place

Have a sharp eye lest the candle ticks out,

Rub the church plate, dust the sacrament lace,

Clear the desk velvet of dust)

VII

Here 's your book younger folks shelve !

Played I not with hand and cunningly,

Just now, your masterpiece, hard number twelve ?

Here 's what should strike, could one handle it
cunning !

Help the axe, give it a helve !

VIII

Page after page as I plaved,

Every bur'st rest, where one wipes

Sweat from one's brow, I looked up and surveyed,

O'er my three cliviers, yon forest of pipes

Whence you still peeped in the shade.

IX

Sure you were wishful to speak,

You, with brow ruled like a score,

Yes, and eyes buried in pits on each cheek,
Like two great breves, as they wrote them of yore,
Each side that bai, your straight beak !

x.

Sure you said—"Good, the mere notes !"
"Still, couldst thou take my intent,
"Know what procured me our Company's votes—
"A master were lauded and sciolists shent,
"Parted the sheep from the goat's !"

xi

Well then, speak up, never flinch !
Quick, ere my candle's a snuff
—Burnt, do you see ? to its uttermost inch —
I believe in you, but that's not enough
Give my conviction a clinch !

xii

First you deliver your phrase
—Nothing propound, that I see,
Fit in itself for much blame or much praise
Answered no less, where no answer need be
Off start the Two on their ways

xiii

Straight must a Third interpose,
Volunteer needlessly help,
In strikes a Fourth, a Fifth thrusts in his nose,
So the cry's open, the kennel's a yelp,
Argument's hot to the close

XIV.

One dissertates, he is candid ;
 Two must discept,—has distinguished ,
 Three helps the couple, if ever yet man did ;
 Four protests , Five makes a clut at the thing wished :
 Back to One, goes the case bundled.

XV

One says his say with a difference ,
 More of expounding, explaining '
 All now is wrangle, abuse and vociferance ,
 Now there 's a truce, all 's subdued, self-restraining
 Five, though, stands out all the stiffer hence.

XVI

One is incisive, erosive ,
 Two retorts, nettled, cut, crepitant ,
 Three makes rejoinder, expansive, explosive ;
 Four overbears them all, student and strepitant :
 Five . . . O Danuads, O Sieve !

XVII.

Now, they ply axes, and crowbars ,
 Now, they jack pins at a tissue
 Fine as a skein of the crusty Escobar's
 Worked on the bone of a lie. To what issue ?
 Where is our gun at the 'Two bars ?

XVIII.

Est fuga, volutur rota.

On we drift : where looms the dim port ?

One, Two, Three, Four, Five, contribute their quota,
 Something is gained, if one caught but the import—
 Show it us, Hugues of Sax Gothi!

XIX

What with affirming, denying,
 Holding, respisting, subjoining,
 All's like it's like . . . for an in tance I'm trying . . .
 There! See our roof, its gilt moulding, and groining
 Under those spider web, lying!

XX

So your fugue broadens and thickens,
 Greatens and deepens and lengthens,
 I'll we exclaim—“Put where's music, the dickens?
 “Blot ye the gold while your spider web strengthens
 —Blacked to the stoutest of ticken?”

XXI

I for man's effort un zealous,
 Prove me such censure unfounded
 Seems it surprising a lover, now zealous—
 Hopes 't was for something, his ot in pipes sounded,
 Tiring three boys at the bellows?

XXII

Is it your moral of Life?
 Such a web, simple and subtle,
 Weave we on earth here in impotent strife,
 Backward and forward each throwing his shuttle,
 Death ending all with a knife?

XXIII

Over our heads truth and nature—

Still our life's zigzags and dodges,
Ins and outs, we win, a new legislature —

God's gold just shining its lustre where **that** lodges,
Palled beneath man's usurpature

XXIV

So we overhroud star and to e,

Cherub in trophy and guland
Nothing's grow something, which quietly closes

Heaven's earnest eye not a glimpse of the **far** land
Gets through our comments and glazes

XXV

Ah but traditions inventions,

(Say we and make up a visage)
So many men with such various intentions,

Down the gutters must know more **than this** age !
Leave we the web its dimensions !

XXVI

Who thinks Hugues wrote for the deaf,

Proved a mere mount in labour ?
Better submit try again, what's the cleft ?

'Faith, 't is no trifle for pipe and for **tabors**
Four flats, the minor in I.

h

XXVII

Friend, your fugue taxes the finger :

Learning it once, who would lose it ?

Yet all the while a mⁱsgiving will linger,
 Truth's golden o'er us although we refuse it—
 Nature, thro' cobwebs we string her

XXVIII

Hugues! I advise *ma pana*
 (Counterpoint glares like a Gorgon)
 Bid One, Two, Three, Four, Five, clear the arena!
 Say the word, straight I unstop the full organ
 Blare out the *mode Pilestrini*

XXIX

While in the roof, if I'm in it there
 . . . Lo you, the wick in the socket
 Hallo, you sacristan, show us a light there!
 Down it dips, gone like a rocket
 What, you want, do you, to come uninvited
 Sweeping the church up for first morning prayers
 And find a poor devil has ended his career
 At the foot of your rotten runged rattled stairs?
 Do I carry the moon in my pocket?

THE
RETURN OF THE DRUSES.

A IRAGLDY.

1843.

PERSONS.

The Grand-Master's Prefect

The Patriarch's Nuncio

The Republic's Admiral

LOUIS DE DREUX, Knight Novice

Initiated Druses—DJABAL, KHAMIL, ANAIL, MIAINI, KARSHOOK,

RAGHI3, AYCOB and other

Uninitiated Druses

Prefect's Guard, Nuncio's Attendants, Admiral's Force

SCENE, 14

PLACE, An Islet at the Southern extremity, colonised by Druses of Lebanon, and garrisoned by the Knights-Hospitallers of Rhodes

SCENE, A Hall in the Prefect's Palace.

THE RETURN OF THE DRUSES.

ACT I

*Enter stately KARSHOOK, KACHIB, AND THE TWO INITIATED
DRUSES, each as he enters taking of the tablet he wears his
distinctive black vest and chitlu in the right hand, & loose
to caulation,*

Kar. The moon is called off in purple fire
Day breaks at last! Break glory with the day,
On Djabal's dread incuminate mystery
Now ready to resume its part-time lapse
Of Hakeem, as the Khalif vanished erst
In what seemed death to uninstructed eyes,
On the Mokattam's verge — our Founder's flesh,
As he resumes our Founder's function!

• *Ragh.* — Death
Sweep to the Christian Prefect that enlived
So long our Druse exiles o'er the sea!

Ay. — Most joy be thine, O Mother mount! Thy brood
Returns to thee, no outcasts as we left,
But thus — not thus! Behind, our Prefect's corpse
Before, a presence like the morning — thine,

Absolute Diabol late,—God Hakeem now
 'That day breaks'

Kar Off then, with disguise at last !
 As from our forms this hateful gub we strip,
 I ose every tongue its glozing accent too,
 Discard each limb the ignoble gesture ! Cry,
 'T is the Druse Nation waders on our mount
 Of the world's secret since the birth of time,
 —No lined ships, no offsets from thy stock,
 No spawn of Christians ne we, Prefect we
 Who use

Ay Who shout

Rah Who seize, a first-fruits, ha —
 Spoil of the spoiler ! Brave !

[*The latter is, and it dispute for, the decorations
 of the hall*]

Kar Hold !

Ay —Mine, I say,
 And mine shall it continue !

Kar Just this finge !
 Take anything beside ! I o spire on spire,
 Curl serpentwis wreathed columns to the top
 O' the roof, and hide themselves mysteriously
 Among the twinkling lights and darks that haunt
 Yon cornice ! Where the huge veil, they suspend
 Before the Prefect's chamber of delight,
 Floats wide, then falls again as if its slave,
 The scented air, took heart now, and anon
 Lost heart to buoy its breadths of gorgeousness

Above the gloom they droop in—all the porch
 I jewelled o'er with frostwork chantry,
 And see yon light point cross of white flume, winking
 How silvery like some fitch broke marble stone
 Have out the Rhodian cross there so thou leav'st me
 This single fringe!

1) He would t'hou do, fox? Help!
— Three hand breadths of sol' from my son was set
To twist, the night he died!

Kar Nay heu the knave!
And I could witness my one daughter borne,
A week since, to the Pretect couch yct fold
These arms, be mute, let world of mine should mur
Our Master's work, delay the Pretect here
A day, prevent his subm lence for Rhodes—
How know I else? Hear me denie I my right
By such a knave!

Ri'h [*interposing*] I ach ravage for him !
 Booty enough ! On, Druses ! Pe there find
 Blood and a heap behind us, with us Dj bal
 Turned Hakeem, and before us I el u on
 Yields the porch ? Spue not ! There his minions dragged
 Thy daughter, Karshook, to the Prefect's couch !
 Ayöoh ! Thy son, to soothe the Prefect's pride
 Bent o'er that task, the death swe it on his brow,
 Carving the spice-tree's heart in scroll work there !
 Onward in Djabal's name !

As the tumult is at height, enter KHALID. A pause and silence.

Kha

Was it for this,

Djabal hath summoned you? Deserve you thus
 A portion in to-day's event? What, here—
 When most behoves your feet fall soft, your eyes
 Sink low, your tongues lie still,—at Djabal's side,
 Close in his very hearing, who, perchance,
 Assumes e'en now God Hakeem's dreaded shape,—
 Dispute you for these gauds?

Ay.

How say'st thou, Khalil!

Doubtless our Master prompts thee! Take the fringe,
 Old Karshook! I supposed it was a day.

Kha. For pillage?

Kur.

Hearken, Khalil! Never spoke

A boy so like a song-bird; we avouch thee
 Prettiest of all our Master's instruments
 Except thy bright twin-sister; thou and Anael
 Challenge his prime regard: but we may crave
 (Such nothings as we be) a portion too
 Of Djabal's favour; in him we believed,
 His bound ourselves, him moon by moon obeyed,
 Kept silence till this daybreak—so, may claim
 Reward: who grudges me my claim?

Ay.

To-day

Is not as yesterday!

Ragh.

Stand off!

Kha.

Rebel you?

Must I, the delegate of Djabal, draw
 His wrath on you, the day of our Return?

Other Druses. Wrench from their grasp the fringe!

Hound! must the earth

Vomit her plagues on us thro' thee?—and thee?
Plague me not, *Khalil*, for their fault!

Kha.

Oh, shame!

'Thus breaks to-day on you, the mystic tube
Who, flying the approach of Osman, bore
Our faith, a merest spark, from Syria's ridge
Its birthplace, hither! "Let the sea divide
"These hunters from their prey," you said; "and
safe

"In this dim islet's virgin solitude
"Tend we our faith, the spark, till happier time
"Fan it to fire; till Hakeem rise again.
"According to his word that, in the flesh
"Which faded on Mokattam ages since,
"He, at our extreme need, would interpose,
"And, reinstating all in power and bliss,
"Lead us himself to Lebanon once more"
Was 't not thus you departed years ago.
Ere I was born?

Druses.

'T was even thus, years ago.

Kha. And did you call—(according to old law,
Which bid us, lest the sacred grow profane,
Assimilate ourselves in outward rites
With strangers fortune make our lords, and live
As Christian with the Christian, Jew with Jew,
Druse only with the Druses)—did you call
Or no, to stand twixt you and Osman's rage,
(Mad to pursue us hither thro' the sea
The remnant of our tribe) a race self vowed

To endless warfare with his hordes and him,
The White cross Knights of the adjacent Isle?

Kar. And why else rend we down, wrench up, raise
out?

These Knights of Rhodes we thus solicited
For help, bestowed on us a fiercer pest
Than ought we fled their Prefect, who began
His promised mere paternal governance,
By a prompt massacre of all our Sheikhs
Able to thwart the Order in its scheme
Of crushing with our nation's memory
Each chance of our return, and turning us
Bondslaves to Rhodes for ever—all, he thinks
'To end by this day's treason

Kha.

Say I not?

You, fitted to the Order's purposes,
Your Sheikhs cut off, your very grub proscribed,
Must yet receive one degradation more;
The Knights at last throw off the mask—transfer,
As tributary now and appanage,
This islet they are but protectors of,
To their own ever craving licence, the Church,
Who licenses all crimes that pay her thus.
You, from their Prefect, were to be consigned
(Pursuant to I know not what vile pact)
To the Knights' Patriarch, ardent to outvie
His predecessor in all wickedness.
When suddenly rose Djabal in the midst,
Djabal, the man in semblance, but our God

Confessed by signs and portents Ye saw fire
Bicker round Djabal, heard strange music flit
Bird like about his brow ?

Druses We saw—we heard !
Djibāl's Hakeem, the incarnate Dread,
The phantasm Khalif King of Pridges !

Kha And as he said with not our Khalit done,
And so disposed events (from land to land
Passing invisibly) that when this morn
The plot of villany complete there comes
This Patriarch's Nuncio with this Master's Prefect
Their treason to consummate, each will flee
For a crouching handful, unlifted nation
For simulated Christians, confessed Druses
And, for slaves past hope of the Mother mount,
Freedmen returning there north Venice flung,
That Venice which, the Mosj it lets for
Grants us from Cincia escort home at part
Of our relinquished isle, Rhodé count her own—
Venice, whose promised rugosities she stands
Toward the harbour is it now that you and you,
And you, selected from the best to bear
The burthen of the Khalit's secret further
To day's event, entitled by your wrongs
And witness in the Prefect I all his tale
That you dare clutch these goods ? Ay, drop the net !

Kar I rue,
Most true, all this, and yet, may one dare hint,
Thou art the youngest of us ?—though employed

Abundantly as Djabal's confidant,
 Transmitter of his mandates, even now.
 Much less, whene'er beside him Anael graces
 The cedar throne, his queen bride, art thou like
 To occupy its lowest step that day!
 Now, Khahl, wert thou checked as thou aspirest,
 Forbidden such or such an honour,—say,
 Would silence serve so amply?

K/a Karshook thinks
 I covet honours? Well, not idly thinks!
 Honour? I have demanded of them all
 The greatest!

Kar I supposed so
Kha Judge yourselves!
 Turn, thus. 't is in the alcove at the back
 Of yonder columned porch, whose entrance now
 The veil hides—that our Prefect holds his state,
 Receives the Vuncio, when the one, from Rhodes,
 The other hinds from Syria, there they meet.
 Now I have sued with earnest prayers . . .

Kar For what
 Shall the Bride's brother vainly sue?

Kha. That mine—
 Avenging in one blow a myriad wrongs
 —Might be the hard to slay the Prefect there!
 Djabal reserves that office for himself. [A silence.
 Thus far, as youngest of you all, I speak
 —Scarce more enlightened than yourselves; since, near
 As I approach him, nearer as I trust

Soon to approach our Master, he reveals
 Only the God's power, not the glory yet.
 Therefore I reasoned with you now, as servant
 To Djabal, bearing his authority,
 Hear me appoint your several posts ! Till noon
 None see him save myself and Aniel once
 The deed achieved, our Khelif, casting off
 The embodied Awe's tremendous mystery
 The weakness of the flesh disuse, resumes
 His proper glory, never to fade again

Enter Druse

The Druse. Our Prefect hinds from Rhodes ! - with-
 out a sign

That he suspects aught since he left our Isle,
 Nor in his train a single guard beyond
 The few he sailed with hence - so have we learned
 From Loys.

Kar. Loys ? Is not Loys gone
 For ever ?

Ilyoob. Loys, the Frank Knight, returned ?

The Druse. Loys, the boy, stood on the landing prow
 Conspicuous in his gay attire, and leapt
 Into the surf the foremost - Since day dawn
 I kept watch to the Northward, take but note
 Of my poor vigilance to Djabal !

Kha. Peace !

Thou, Karshook, with thy company, receive
 The Prefect as appointed - see, all keep
 The wonted show of servitude. announce

His entry here by the accustomed peal
 Of trumpets, then await the further pleasure
 Of Djabal! (Loys back, whom Djabal sent
 To Rhodes that we might spare the single Knight
 Worth sparing!)

Enter a second Druse

The Druse I espied it first! Saw, I
 First spied the Nuncio's galley from the South!
 Said'st thou a Crossed keys flag would flap the mast?
 It nears apace! One galley and no more
 If Djabal chance to ask who spied the flag,
 Forget not, I it was!

Kha I thou, Ayooob, bring
 The Nuncio and his followers hither! Break
 One rule prescribed, ye wither in your blood,
 Die at your fault!

Enter a third Druse

The Druse I shall see home, see home!
 —Shall banquet in the sombre groves again!
 Hail to thee, Khalil! Venice looms afar;
 The aigosies of Venice, like a cloud,
 Bear up from Candia in the distance!

Kha. Summon our people, Raghil! Bid all forth!
 Tell them the long kept secret, old and new!
 Set free the captives, let the trampled
 Their faces from the dust, because at last
 The cycle is complete, God Hakeem
 Begins anew! Say, Venice for ever!

Ere night we steer for Syria ! Hear you, Druses ?
 Hear you this crowning witness to the claims
 Of Djabal ! Oh, I spoke of hope and fear,
 Reward and punishment, because he bade
 Who has the right, for me, what should I say
 But, mar not those imperial lineaments,
 No majesty on that rapt regard
 Vex by the least of his ion ! Let him rise
 Without a check from you !

Druses

Let Djabal rise !

Enter LOYS — The Druses are silent

Loys. Who speaks of Djabal ?—for I seek him,
 friends !

[Aside.] Tu Dieu ! 'T is as our Isle broke out in song
 For joy, its Prefect incubus drops off
 To-day, and I succeed him in his rule !
 But no—they cannot dream of their good fortune !

[Loud.] Peace to you, Druses ! I have tidings for you,
 But first for Djabal : where's your tall bewitcher,
 With that small Arab thin-lipped silver mouth ?

Kha. *[Aside to KAR.]* Loys, in truth ! Yet Djabal
 cannot err !

Kar. *[To KHA.]* And who takes charge of Loys ?
 • That is forgotten,

Despite this darkness ! Will Loys stand
 And see his comrades slaughtered ?

Loys *[Aside.]* How they shrink
 And whisper in their rapid faces ! What ?
 The sight of these oppressors' garb

Strikes terror to the simple tribe? God's shame
 On those that bring our Order ill repute!
 But all 's at end now, better days begin
 For these mild mountaineers from over-sea:
 The timidest shall have in me no Prefect
 To cower at thus! [*Aloud*] I asked for Djabal—

Kâr [*Aside*]

Better

One lured him, ere he 's in suspect, inside
 The corridor, 't were easy to dispatch
 A youngster [*To Loys.*] Djabal passed some minutes
 since

Thro' yonder porch, and . . .

Kha [*Aside*]

Hold! What, him dispatch?

The only Christian of them all we charge
 No tyranny upon? Who,—noblest Knight
 Of all that learned from time to time their trade
 Of lust and cruelty among us,—here
 To Europe's pomp, a truest child of pride,—
 Yet stood between the Prefect and ourselves
 From the beginning? Loys, Djabal makes
 Account of, and precisely sent to Rhodes
 For safety?—I take charge of him!

[*To Loys*]

Sir Loys,—

Loys There, cousins! Does Sir Loys strike you dead?

Kha. [*advancing.*] Djabal has intercourse with few
 or none

Till noontide: but, your pleasure?

Loys.

"Intercourse

"With few or none?"—(Ah Khalil, when you spoke

I saw not your smooth face ! All health !—and health
 To Anael ! How fares Anael ?)—“ Intercourse
 “ With few or none ? ” Forget you, I ’ve been friendly
 With Djabal long ere you or any Druse ?
 —Enough of him at Rennes, I think, beneath
 The Duke my father’s roof ! He ’d tell by the hour,
 With fixed white eyes beneath his swarthy brow,
 Plausibliest stories . . .

Kha. Stories, say you ?— Ah,
 The quaint attire !

Loys. My dress for the last time !
 How sad I cannot make you understand,
 This ermine, o’er a shield, betokens me,
 Of Bretagne, ancientest of provinces
 And noblest ; and, what ’s best and old est there,
 See, Dreux’, our house’s blazon, which the Nuncio
 Tacks to an Hospitaller’s vest to day !

Kha. The Nuncio we await ? What brings you back
 From Rhodes, Sir Loys ?

Loys. How you and tribe
 Forget the world awake while here you drowse !
 What brings me back ? What should not bring me,
 rather ?

Our Patriarch’s Nuncio visits you to day—
 Is not my year’s probation out ? I come
 To take the knightly vows.

Kha. “ . . . What ’s that you wear ? ”

Loys. This Rhodian cross ? The cross your Prefect
 wore.

You should have seen, as I saw, the full Chapter
 Rise, to a man while they transferred this cross
 From that unworthy Prefect's neck to . . . (fool—
 My secret will escape me!) In a word,
 My year's probation passed, a Knight ere eve
 Am I, bound, like the rest, to yield my wealth
 To the common stock, to live in chastity,
 (We Knights, & pouse alone our Orders fame)
 —Change this gay weed for the blue & white-crossed gown,
 And fight to death against the Infidel
 —Not therefore, I trust you, you Christians with
 Such partial difference only as befits
 The peacefullest of tribes! Put Khalil, prithee,
 Is not the Isle brighter than wont to day?

Kha Ah, the new sword!

Loys See now! You handle sword
 As 't were a camel staff! Pull! That's my motto,
 Annealed "*Pra fidu*," on the blade in blue.

Kha No curve in it? Surely a blade should curve!

Loys. Strught from the wrist! Loose—it should
 poise itself!

Kha [waving with irrepressible exultation the sword]

We are a nation, Loys, of old fame
 Among the mountuns! Rights have we to keep
 With the sword too!
 [Remembering himself] But I forget—you bid me
 Seek Djabal?

Loys. What! A sword's sight scares you not?
 (The People I will make of him and him)

Oh let my Prefect sway begin at once !
Bring Djabal—nay, indeed, that come he must !

Kha. At noon seek Djabal in the Prefect's Chamber,
And find . . . [*Aside.*] Nay, 't is thy cursed race's token,
Frank pride, no special insolence of thine !

[*Aloud.*] Tarry, and I will do your bidding, Loys !

[*To the rest aside.*] Now, forth you ! I proceed to
Djabal straight.

Leave this poor boy, who knows not what he says !

Oh will it not add joy to even thy joy,

Djabal, that I report all friends were true ?

[*KHALIL goes, followed by the Druses.*]

Loys. *Tu Dieu !* How happy I shall make these
Druses !

Was 't not surpassingly contrived of me
To get the long list of their wrongs by heart,
Then take the first pretence for stealing off
From these poor islanders, present myself
Sudden at Rhodes before the noble Chapter,
And (as best proof of ardour in its cause
Which ere to-night will have become, too, mine)
Acquaint it with this plague-sore in its body,
This Prefect and his villanous career ?
The princely Synod ! All I dared request
Was his dismissal, and they graciously
Consigned his very office to myself—
Myself may cure the Isle diseased !

And well

For them, they did so ! Since I never felt

How lone a lot, tho' brilliant, I embrace,
 Till now that, past retrieval, it is mine.
 To live thus, and thus die ! Yet, as I leapt
 On shore, so home a feeling greeted me
 That I could half believe in Djabal's story,
 He used to tempt my father with, at Rennes—
 And me, too, since the story brought me here—
 Of some Count Dreux and ancestor of ours
 Who, sick of wandering from Bouillon's war,
 Left his old name in Lebanon.

Long days

At least to spend in the Isle ! and, my news known
 An hour hence, what if Anael turn on me
 The great black eyes I must forget ?

Why, fool,

Recall them, then ? My business is with Djabal,
 Not Anael ! Djabal tarries : if I seek him ?—
 The Isle is brighter than its wont to-day !

ACT II.

Enter DJABAL.

Dja. That a strong man should think none of a God !
 I—Hakeem ? To have wandered through the world,
 Sown falsehood, and thence reaped now scorn, now faith,

For my one chant with many a change, my tale
 Of outrage, and my prayer for vengeance—this
 Required, forsooth, no more man's faculty,
 Nor less than Hakeem's? The persuading Loys
 To pass probation here, the getting access
 Py I oys to the Prefect worst of all,
 The gaining my tribe's confidence by fraud
 That would disgrace the very Frank,—a few
 Of Europe's secrets which subdue the tune,
 The wave,—to ply a simple tribe with these,
 Took Hakeem?

And I feel this first to day!
 Does the day break, is the hour imminent
 When one deed, when my whole life's deed,
 Must be accomplished? Hakeem? Why the God?
 Shout, rather, "Djabul, Youssof's child, nought slum
 "With his whole race, the Druses' Sheikhs, this Prefect
 "Endeavoured to extirpate—saved—
 "Returns from traversing the world, a man,
 "Able to take revenge, lead back the march
 "To Lebanon"—so shout, and who unsays?
 But now, because delusion mixed itself
 Insensibly with this career, all's changed!
 If I've I brought Venice to afford us convoy?
 "True—but my jugglings wrought that!" Put I heart
 Into our people, where no heart lurked?—"Ah,
 "What cannot an impostor do!"

Not this!

Not do this which I do! Not bid, avoant

Falsehood !, Thou shalt not keep thy hold on me !

—Nor even get a hold on me ! 'T is now—

This day—hour—minute—'t is as here I stand

On the accursed threshold of the Prefect

That I am found deceiving and deceived !

And now what do I ?—hasten to the few

Deceived, ere they deceive the many—shout,

“ As I professed, I did believe myself !

“ Say, Druses, had you seen a butchery—

“ If Ayoob, Karshook saw——Maani there

“ Must tell you how I saw my father sink ;

“ My mother's arms twine still about my neck ;

“ I hear my brother shriek, here 's yet the sear

“ Of what was meant for my own death-blow—say,

“ If you had woke like me, grown year by year

“ Out of the tumult in a far-off clime,

“ Would it be wondrous such delusion grew ?

“ I walked the world, asked help at every hand ;

“ Came help or no ? Not this and this ? Which helps

“ When I returned with, found the Prefect here

“ The Druses here, all here, but Hakeem's self

“ The Khalif of the thousand prophecies

“ Reserved for such a juncture,—could I call

“ My mission aught but Hakeem's ? Promised Hakeem

“ More than performs the Djabal—you, abusive ?

“ —Me, you will never shame before the crowd

“ Yet happily ignorant ?—Me, both things surround

“ The few deceived, the many unabused

“ —Who, thus surrounded, slay for you and them

The Prefect, lead to Lebanon? No Khalif,
 "But Sheikh ~~once~~ more! Mere Djibāl—not" . . .

Erha KHAIL ha t :

Kha

—God Hakeem!

'Tis told! The whole Druse nation knows thee, Hakeem,
 As we! and mothers lift on high their babes
 Who seem aware, so glisten their great eyes,
 Thou hast not failed us, in rent brows are proud!
 Our elders could not earlier die, it seems,
 Than at thy coming! The Druse heart is thine!
 I take it! my lord and theirs be thou adored!

Dja. [Aside] Adored — but I renounce it utterly!

Kha Already we 'ave instituted, (he)

And dances to the Khalif as of old

'Tis chronicled thou hadst them

Dja. [Aside.]

I ~~swear~~ ^{swear} it!

'Tis not mine—not for me!

Kha

Why pour they wine

Flavoured like honey and bruised mountain herbs,

Or wear those strings of sundried red fruit?

Oh, let me tell thee—'Tis said, we supplanted

Doting, is carried forth, eager to see

The last sun rise on the Isle he can see now!

The shamed Druse women never wept before

They can look up when we reach home, they say.

Sweet!—sweet wine, saved in Ilith's breast thus long—

Sweet!—it grows wild in Lebanon And I

Alone do nothing for thee! 'Tis my office

Just to announce what well thou know'st—but thus

Thou bidst me. At this self-same moment tend
 The Prefect, Nuncio and the Admiral,
 Hither by their three sea-paths: nor forget
 Who were the trusty watchers!—thou forget?
 Like me, who do forget that Anael bade . . .

Dja. [*Aside*] Ay, Anael, Anael—is that said at
 last?

Louder than all, that would be said, I knew!
 What does abjuring mean, confessing mean,
 To the people? Till that woman crossed my path,
 On went I solely for my people's sake:
 I saw her, and I then first saw myself,
 And slackened pace: "if I should prove indeed
 "Hakeem—with Anael by!"

Kha. [*Aside*] Ah, he is rapt!
 Dare I at such a moment break on him
 Even to do my sister's bidding? Yes:
 The eyes are Djabal's and not Hakeem's yet,
 Though but till I have spoken this, perchance.

Dja. [*Aside*] To yearn to tell her, and yet have no
 one

Great heart's word that will tell her! I could gasp
 Doubtless one such word out, and die.

[*Aloud*.] You said

That Anael . . .

Kha. . . . Fain would see thee, speak with thee,
 Before thou change, discard this Djabal's shape.
 She knows, for Hakeem's shape she is to know,
 Something to say that will not from her mind!

I know not what—"Let him but come!" she said.

Dja. [*Half-apart.*] My nation—all my Druses—how
fare they?

Those I must save, and suffer thus to save,
Hold they their posts? Wait they their Khalf too?

Kha. All at the signal pant to flock around
That banner of a brow!

Dja. [*Aside.*] And when they flock,
Confess them this: and after, for reward,
Be chased with howlings to her feet purchase!
—Have the poor outraged Druses, do it und blind,
Precede me there, forestall my story there,
Tell it in mocks and jeers!

I lose myself!

Who needs a Hakeem to direct him now?
I need the veriest child—why not this child?

[*Enter a young Druse, called KHULIL.*]

You are a Druse too, Khulil, you were nourished
Like Anael with our mysteries. if she
Could vow, so nourished, to love only one
Who should avenge the Druses, whence proceeds
Your silence? Wherefore made you no essay,
Who thus implicitly can execute
My bidding? What have I done, you could not?
Who, knowing more than Anael the prostration
Of our once lofty tribe, the daily life
Of this detested . . .

Does he come, you say,
This Prefect? All's in readiness?

Dja And wisely. He is Anael's brother, pure
 As Anael's self. Go say, I come to her.
 Haste! I will follow you [KHALIL goes.

Oh, not confess

To these, the blinded multitude confess,
 Before at least the fortune of my deed
 Half authorize its measure! Only to her
 Let me confess my fault who in my path
 Curled up like moonlight from a magic king's tomb
 When he would have the wayfarer descend
 Through the earth's rift in a dear hid treasure forth!
 When should my first child's creaking have stopped
 If not when I, whose long youth hurried past,
 Letting each joy's cup for the Druse's sake,
 At length recovered in one Druse all joy?
 Were her brow brighter, her eyes richer still
 Would I confess! On the gulf's verge a pause.
 How could I slay the Protect, thus and thus?
 Anael, be mine to guard me, not destroy! [Goes.

*Enter ANAEL, and MAANI. / is a little to carry her in the
 ancient dress of the Druses.*

An Those saffron vestures of the tourist girls!
 Comes Djahal, think you?

Maani. Doubtless Djahal comes.

An Dost thou snow-swith the thee king's heir, I ebanon,
 Than in my dreams?—Nay, all the tresses off
 My forehead! Look I lovely so? He says
 That I am lovely!

Mac. Lovely . nay, that hangs
Awry

An. You tell me how a khondjar hangs?
The sharp side, thus, along the heart, see, marks
The maiden of our class Are you content
For Djabal as for me?

Maa Cont nt, my child.

An Oh mother, tell me more of him ! He comes,
Even now— tell more fill up my soul with him !

Mia And did I not yes surely . tell you all?

An What will be change I in Djibul when the Change Arrives? Which feature? Not his eyes!

Our Hakeem's eyes rolled in and close the dark
Superbly.

An Not his eyes! His voice perhaps?
Yet that's no change, for a grave current lived
—Grandly beneath the surface ever lived,
That, scattering, broke a in live silver spray
While . . . ah the bliss he would discourse to me
In that enforced still fashion, word on word!
'T is the old current which must swell thro' that,
For what least tone, Manni, could I lose?
'T is surely not his voice will change!

Only stood by! If Djibal, somehow, passed
Out of the radiance as from out a robe;
Possessed, but was not it!

He lived with you?

Well—and that morning Djabal saw me first,
 And heard me vow never to wed but one
 Who saved my People—on that day . . . proceed !

Ma. Once more, then from the time of his return
 In secret, changed so since he left the Isle
 That I, who screened our Emir's list of sons,
 This Djabal, from the Pasha's massacre
 —Who bade him ne'er forget the child he was,
 —Who dreamed so long the youth he might become—
 I knew not in the man that child, the man
 Who spoke alone of hope to save our tribe,
 How he had gone from land to land to save
 Our tribe—allies were sure, not foes to die,
 And much he mused, days, nights, alone he mused !
 But never till that day when, pale and worn
 As by a persevering woe, he cried
 "Is there not one Druse left me?"—and I showed
 The way to Khalil's and your hiding place
 From the abhorred eye of the Pasha here,
 So that he saw you, heard you speak—till then,
 Never did he announce—(how the moon seemed
 To open and shut, the while, above us both !)
 —His mission was the mission promised us,
 The cycle had revolved, all things revolving
 He was lost Hakeem clothed in flesh to lead
 His children home anon, now veiled to work
 Great purposes: the Druses now would change !

An. And they have changed ! And obstacles did sink,
 And furtherances rose ! And round his form

Played fire, and music beat her angel wings !
 My people, let me more rejoice, oh more
 For you than for myself ! Did I but watch
 Afar the pageant, feel our Khalif pass,
 One of the throng, how proud were I—tho' ne'er
 Singled by Djahâl's glance ! But to be chosen
 His own from all, the most his own of all,
 To be exalted with him, side by side
 Lead the exulting Druses, meet th, how
 Worthily meet the mudens who wait
 Ever beneath the cedars—how deserve
 This honor, in their eyes ? So bright are they
 Who saffron vested sound the tabret there,
 The girls who throng there in my dream ! One hour
 And all is over—how shall I do aught
 That may deserve next hour's exalting ?—How ?—

[Suddenly to MAANI

Mother, I am not worthy him ! I read it
 Still in his eyes ! He stands as if to tell me
 I am not, yet forbears—Why else revert
 To one theme ever ?—how mere human gifts
 Suffice him in myself—whose worship fades,
 Whose awe goes ever off at his approach,
 As now, who when he comes . . .

[DJABAL enters]

Do not kneel to you ?

Oha.

Should kneel to you, my Anael !

Oh why is it

Rather, 't is I

For never seem you—shall I speak the truth?—
 Never a God to me! 'T is the Man's hand,
 Eye, voice! Oh do you veil these to our people,
 Or but to me? To them, I think, to them!
 And brightness is their veil, shadow—my truth!
 You mean that I should never kneel to you
 —So I will kneel!

Dja. [*preventing her*] No—no!

[*Following the handymen as he uses her*

Ha, have you chosen

Al! Al! grandiar with our ancient garb But, Djabil,
 Change not, be not exalted yet! Give time
 That I may plan more, perfect more! My blood
 Beats beats!

[*Aside*] Oh must I then—since I oys leaves us
 Never to come again, renew in me
 These doubts so near effaced already—must
 I needs confess them now to Djibil?—own
 That when I saw that stranger, heard his voice,
 My faith fell, and the woeful thought flashed first
 That each effect of Djibil's presence, taken
 For proof of more than human attributes
 In him, by me whose heart at his approach
 Beat fast, whose brain while he was by swam round,
 Whose soul at his departure died away,
 —That every such effect might have been wrought
 In other frames—no, not in mine, by I oys
 Or any mortal presence? Doubt
 Is fading fast—must I reveal it now?

How shall I meet the rapture presently,
With doubt unexpired, undisclosed ?

Dja. [*Aside*] Avow the truth ? I cannot ! In what
words

Avow that all she loved in me was false ?
- Which yet has served that slower like love of hers
To climb by like the clinging gourd, and clasp
With its divinest wealth of leaf and bloom
Could I take down the prop work, in itself
So vile, yet interlaced and overlaid
With painted cups and fruitage—might these still
Bask in the sun unconscious their own strength
Of matted stalk and tendrils had replaced
The old support thus silently withdrawn !
But no, the benighted fabric crashes too
It is not for my sake but for Ariel's sake
I leave her soul this Hikeem where it leans !
Oh could I vanish from her sight the Isle !
And yet— a thought comes here my work is done
At every point, the Druses must return —
Have convoy to their birthplace back, whoever
The leader be myself or my Druse —
Venice is pledged to that it is for myself,
For my own vengeance in the Prefect's death,
I stay now, not for them to slay or spare
The Prefect, whom imports it save myself ?
He cannot bar their passage from the Isle,
What would his death be but my own reward ?
Then, mine I will forego It is foregone !

Let him escape with all my House's blood •
 Ere he can reach land, Djabal disappears,
 And Hakeem, Anael loved, shall, fresh as first,
 Live in her memory, keeping her sublime
 Above the world. She cannot touch that world •
 By ever knowing what I truly am,
 Since Loys,—of mankind the only one
 Able to link my present with my past,
 My life in Europe with my Island life,
 Thence, able to unmask me, I've disposed
 Safely at last at Rhodes, and

Enter KHAKH

Kha. Loys greets thee !

Dja. Loys ? To drag me back ? It cannot be !

An. [Aside.] Loys ! Ah, doubt may not be stifled so !

Kha. Can I have erred that thou so givest ? Yes,

I told thee not in the glad press of tidings

Of higher import, Loys is returned •

Before the Prefect, with, if possible,

Twice the light-heartedness of old as though

On some inauguration he expect,

To dry, the world's fate hums !

Dja. — And asks for me ?

• *Kha.* Thou knowest all things ! Thee in chief he
 greets,

But every Druse of us is to be happy

At his arrival, he declares : were Loys

I thou, Master, he could have no wider soul

To take us in with. How I love that Loys !

Dja. [*Aside*] Shame winds me with her tether round
and round!

An [*Aside*] Loys? I take the trial! it is meet,
The little I can do, be done, that faith,
All I can offer, want no perfecting
Which my own act may compass. Ay, this way
All may go well, not that ignoble doubt
Be chased by other aid than mine. Advance
Close to my fear, weigh I oys with my Lord,
The mortal with the more than mortal gifts!

Dja [*Aside*] Before there were so few deceived, and
now

There's doubtless not one least Druse in the Isle
But, having learned my superhuman claims,
And calling me his khalif God will crush
The whole truth out from Loys at first word!
While Loys, for his part, will hold me up,
With a Frank's unimaginable scorn
Of such imposture to my people's eyes!
Could I but keep him longer yet while
From them, amuse him here until I plan
How he and I at once may leave the Isle!
Khalil I cannot part with from my side—
My only help in this emergency
There's Anael!

An. Please you?

Dja. Anael, none but she!
[*To ANAEL.*] I pass some minutes in the chamber there,
Here I see Loys: you shall speak with him.

Until I join you. Khalil follows me.

An. [*Aside*] As I divined : he bids me save myself,
Offers me a probation— I accept !

Let me see Loys !

Toys. [*Without*] Djâbl !

An. [*Aside*] 'T his voice

The smooth Frank trifler with our people's wrongs,
The self complacent boy inquirer loud
On this and that inflicted tyranny,
—Aught serving to parade in notice
Of how wrong feels, inflicted ! Let me close
With what I viewed at distance let myself
Probe this delusion to the core !

Dja.

He comes

Khalil, along with me ! while An cl waits

Ull I return once more — and but once more !

ACT III

ANAFI and LOYS

An. Here leave me ! Here I wait another 'T was
For no mad protestation of a love
Like this you say possesses you, I came

Loys. Love, how protest a love I dare not feel ?
Mad words that doubtless have escaped me : you
Are here—I only feel you here !

An , No more !

Loys. But once again, whom could you love ? I dare,
 Alas, say nothing of myself, who am
 A Knight now, for when Knighthood we embrace,
 Love we abjure so, speak on safely speak,
 Lest I speak, and betray my faith ! And yet
 To save your breathing passes through me, changes
 My blood to spirit, and my spirit to you,
 As Heaven the sacrificer's wine to it—
 This is not to protest my love ! You said
 You could love one

An One only ! We are bent
 To earth—who uses up my tribe, I love,
 The Prefect bows us—who removes him, we
 Have ancient rights—who gives them back to us,
 I love I forbear me ! I let my hand go !

Loys Him
 You could love only ? Where is Djabal ? Stay !
 [*Aside*] Yet wherefore stay ? Who does this but
 myself ?

Had I apprised her that I come to do
 Just this, what more could she acknowledge ? No,
 She sees into my heart's core ! What is it
 Feeds either cheek with red, as June some rose ?
 Why turns she from me ? Ah fool, over-fond,
 To dream I could call up . . .
. . . What never dream
 Yet feigned ! 'T is love ! Oh Angel speak to me !
 Djabal—

An Seek Djabal by the Prefect's chamber
At noon ! *[She passes the room]*

Loy's [Aside.] And am I not the Prefect now ?
Is it my fate to be the only one
Able to win her love, the only one
Unable to accept her love ? The past
Breaks up beneath my footing—come I here
This morn'g as to a slave, to set her free
And take her thanks, and then spend day by day
Content beside her in the Isle ? What work
This knowledge in me now ? Her eye has broken
The faint disguise worn for Amel's sake
I left the Isle, for her espoused the cause
Of the Druses, all for her I thought, till now
To live without !

—As I must live ! To-day
Ordains me Knight, forbids me never shall
Forbid me to profess myself, heart, arm,
Thy soldier !

An Djabal you demand a comes !

Loy's. [Aside.] What would'st thou, Loy ? See him ?
Nought beside •

Is wanting • I have felt his voice & pull
From first to last. He brought me here, made known
The Druses to me, drove me hence to seek
Redress for them ; and shall I meet him now,
When nought is wanting but a word of his,
To—what ?—induce me to spurn hope, faith, pride,
Honour away, —to cast my lot among

His tribe, become a proverb in men's mouths,
 Breaking my high pact of companionship
 With those who graciously bestowed on me
 The very opportunities I turn
 Against them ! Let me not see Djabal now !

An. The Prefect also comes !

Loys. [*Aside.*] Him let me see,
 Not Djabal ! Him, degraded at a word,
 To soothe me,—to attest belief in me—
 And after, Djabal ! Yes, ere I return
 To her, the Nuncio's vow shall have destroyed
 This heart's rebellion, and coerced this will
 For ever.

Anael, not before the vows
 Irrevocably fix me . . .

Let me fly !

The Prefect, or I lose myself for ever !

[*Cries.*

An. Yes, I am calm now ; just one way remains—
 One, to attest my faith in him : for, see,
 I were quite lost else : Loys, Djabal, stand
 On either side—two men ! I balance looks
 And words, give Djabal a man's preference,
 No more. In Djabal, Hakeem is absorbed !
 And for a love like this, the God who saves
 My race, selects me for his bride ? One way !—

Enter DJABAL.

Djab. [*To himself.*] No moment is to waste then ; 't is
 resolved.
 If Khalil may be trusted to lead back

My Druses, and if Loys can be lured
 Out of the Isle—if I procure his silence,
 Or promise never to return at least,—
 All 's over. Even now my bark awaits :
 I reach the next wild isle and the next,
 And lose myself beneath the sun for ever.
 And now, to Anael !

An. Djabal, I am thine !

Dja. Mine ? Djabal's ?—As if Hakeem had not
 been ?

An. Not Djabal's ? Say first, do you read my thought ?
 Why need I speak, if you can read my thought ?

Dja. I do not, I have said a thousand times.

An. (My secret 's safe, I shall surprise him yet !)

Djabal, I knew your secret from the first .

Djabal, when first I saw you . . . (by our porch

You leant, and pressed the tinkling veil away,

And one fringe fell behind your neck—(I see)

. . . I knew you were not human, for I said

“ This dim secluded house where the sea beats

“ Is heaven to me—my people's hut, the hell

“ To them ; this august form will follow me,

“ Mix with the waves his voice will,—I have him

“ And ~~they~~, the Prefect ! Oh, my happiness

“ Rounds to the full whether I choose or no !

“ His eyes met mine, he was about to speak,

“ His hand grew damp—surely he meant to say

“ He let me love him in that moment's bliss

“ I shall forget my people pine for home—

" They pass and they repass with pallid eyes ! "

I vowed at once a certain vow , this vow —

Not to embrace you till my tribe was ' lived

Embrace me !

Dja, [*Apart*] And she love I me ! Nought remained

But that ! Nay, Anael, is the Prefect dead ?

An Ah, you reproach me ! True, his death crowns
all,

I know—or should know—and I would do much,

Believe ! but, death ! Oh you, who have known death,

Would never deem the Prefect were death fearful

As we report !

Death ! a fire curls within us

From the foot's palm, and fills up to the brain,

Up, out, then shatters the whole bubble-shell

Of flesh, parchment !

Death !—witness, I would die,

Whatever death be, would venture now to die

For Khalil, for Mami—what for thee ?

Nay but embrace me, Djahil, in assurance

My vow will not be broken, for I must

Do something to attest my faith in you,

Be worthy you

Dja [*avoiding her*] I come for that—to say

such an occasion is at hand 't is like

I leave you—that we part, my Anael,—part

For ever !

An. We part ? Just so ! I have succumbed,—
I am, he thinks, unworthy—and nought less

Will serve than such approval of my faith.
Then, we part not ! Remains there no way short
Of that ? Oh not that !

Death !— yet a hurt bird
Died in my hands ; its eyes filmed—“ Nay, it sleeps,”
I said, “ will wake to morrow well .” ’t was dead !

Dja. I stand here and time fleets. Anael—I come
To bid a last farewell to you : perhaps
We never meet again. But, ere the Prefect
Arrive . . .

Enter KHALIL, *with* his

Kha. He ’s here ! The Prefect ! Twenty guards,
No more—no sign he dreams of danger. All
Awaits thee only. Ayoub, Karshoul, keep
Their posts—wait but the deed’s accomplishment
To join us with thy Druses to a man !
Still holds his course the Nuncio—near and near
The fleet from Candia steering !

Dja. [*Aside.*] All is lost !
—Or won ?

Kha. And I have laid the sacred robe,
The sword, the head-tiar, at the porch—the place
Commanded. Thou wilt hear the Prefect’s trumpet.

Dja. Then I keep Anael,—him then, past recall,
I slay—’t is forced on me ! As I began
I must conclude—so be it !

Kha. For the rest,
Save Loys, our foe’s solitary sword,
All is so safe that . . . I will ne’er entreat

Thy post again of thee : tho' danger none,
There must be glory only meet for thee
In slaying the Prefect '

An. [*Aside*] And 't is now that Djabal
Would leave me !—in the glory meet for him !

Dja. As glory, I would yield the deed to you
Or any Diuse, what peril there may be,
I keep. [*Aside*] All things conspire to hound me
on !

Not now, my soul, draw back, at least ! Not now !
The course is plun, howe'er obscure all else.
Once offer this tremendous sacrifice,
Prevent what else will be irreparable,
Secure these transcendental helps, regain
The Cedars—then let all dark clear itself !
I slay him !

Kha Angel, and no part for us !

[*To Dja*] Hast thou possessed her with . . .

Dja. [*to An.*] Whom speak you to ?
What is it you behold there ? Nay, this smile
Turns stranger. Shudder you ? The man must die,
As thousands of our race have died thro' him.
One blow, and I discharge his weary soul . . .
From the flesh that pollutes it ! Let him fill
Straight some new expiatory form, of earth
Or sea, the reptile or some acrything
What is there in his death ?

An. My brother said,
Is there no part in it for us ?

Dja.

For Khalil—

The trumpet will announce the Nuncio's entry ;
Here, I shall find the Prefect hastening
In the Pavilion to receive him—here
I slay the Prefect, meanwhile Ayoob leads
The Nuncio with his guards within : once these
Secured in the outer hall, bid Ayoob bar
Entry or egress till I give the sign
Which waits the landing of the argosies
You will announce to me : this double sign
That justice is performed and help arrived,
When Ayoob shall receive, but not before,
Let him throw ope the palace doors, admit
The Druses to behold their tyrant, ere
We leave for ever this detested spot.
Go, Khalil, hurry all ! No pause, no pause !
Whirl on the dream, secure to wake anon !

Kha. What sign ? and who the bearer ?

Dja.

Who shall show

My ring, admit to Ayoob. How she stands !
Have I not . . . I must have some task for her.
Anael, not that way ! 'Tis the Prefect's chamber !
Anael, keep you the ring—give you the sign !
(It holds her safe amid the stir.) You will
Be faithful ?

An. [*taking the ring*.] I would fain be worthy of you !

[*Trumpet sounds*.]

Kha. He comes !

Dja.

And I too come !

An. One word, but one !
 Say, shall you be exalted at the deed ?
 Then ? On the instant ?

Dja. I exalted ? What ?
 He, there—we, thus—our wrongs revenged, our tribe
 Set free ? Oh, then shall I, assure yourself,
 Shall you, shall each of us, be in his death
 Exalted !

Kha. He is here !

Dja. Away—away ! [*They go.*]

Enter the PREFECT with Guards, and LOYS.

The Prefect [to Guards.] Back, I say, to the galley
 every guard !

That 's my sole care now ; see each bench retains
 Its complement of rowers ; I embark
 O' the instant, since this Knight will have it so.
 Alas me ! Could you have the heart, my Loys ?
 [*To a Guard who whispers.*] Oh, bring the holy Nuncio
 here forthwith !

[*The Guards go.*]

Loys, a rueful sight, confess, to see
 The grey discarded Prefect leave his post,
 With tears i' the eye ! So, you are Prefect now ?
 You depose me—you succeed me ? Ha, ha !

Loys. And dare you laugh, whom laughter less becomes
 Than yesterday's forced meekness we beheld . .

Pref.—When you so eloquently pleaded, Loys,
 For my dismissal from the post ?—Ah, meek
 With cause enough, consult the Nuncio else !

And wish him the like meekness : for so staunch
 A servant of the church can scarce have bought
 His shure in the Isle, and paid for it, hard pieces !
 You 've my successor to condole with, Nuncio !
 I shall be safe by then i' the galley, Loys !

Loys. You make as you would tell me you rejoice
 To leave your scene of . . .

Pref. Trade in the dear Druses ?
 Blood and sweat traffic ? Spare what yesterday
 We had enough of ! Drove I in the Isle
 A profitable game ? Learn wit, my son,
 Which you 'll need shortly ! Did it never breed
 Suspicion in you, all was not pure profit,
 When I, the insatiate . . . and so forth—was bent
 On having a partaker in my rule ?
 Why did I yield this Nuncio half the gain,
 If not that I might also shift—what on him ?
 Half of the peril, Loys !

Loys. Peril ?

Pref. Hail you !
 I 'd love you if you 'd let me—this for reason,
 You save my life at price of . . . well, say risk
 At least, of yours. I came a long time since
 To the Isle ; our Hospitallers bade me tame
 These savage wizards, and reward myself -

Loys. The Knights who so repudiate your crime ?

Pref. Loys, the Knights ! we doubtless understood
 Each other ; as for trusting to reward
 From any friend beside myself . . . no, no !
 I clutched mine on the spot, when it was sweet,

And I had taste for it. I felt these wizards
 Alive—was sure they were not on me, only
 When I was on them : but with age comes caution :
 And stinging pleasures please less and sting more
 Year by year, fear by fear ! The guls were brighter
 Than éver ('faith, there 's yet one Anael left,
 I set my heart upon—Oh, prithee, let
 That brave new sword lie still !)—These joys looked
 brighter,

But silenter the town, too, as I passed:
 With this alcove's delicious memories
 Began to mingle visions of gaunt fathers,
 Quick eyed sons, fugitives from the mine, the oar
 Stealing to catch me. brief, when I began
 To quake with fear—(I think I hear the Chapter
 Solicited to let me leave, now all
 Worth staying for was gained and gone !)—I say,
 Just when for the remainder of my life
 All methods of escape seemed lost—that then
 Up should a young hot headed Loys spring,
 Talk very long and loud,—in fine, compel
 The Knights to break their whole arrangement, have me
 Home for pure shame—from this safehold of mine
 Where but ten thousand Druses seek my life,
 To my wild place of banishment, San Gines
 By Murcia, where my three fat manors lying,
 Purchased by gains here and the Nuncio's gold,
 Are all I have to guard me,—that such fortune
 Should fall to me, I hardly could expect !
 Therefore I say, I 'd love you !

Iris

Can it be?

I lay into your hands then? Oh no, no!

The Venerable Chapter, the Great Order

'unk o' the sudden into fiends, of the pit?

But I will back—will yet not fail you!

Prief

Me?

To whom?—perhaps Sir Giles, who in Chapter
Shook his white head thrice— and some dozen times
My hand next morning shook for value paid!

To that Italian saint Sir Cosimo?—

Indignant at my wringing year by year

A thousand bezants from the coral divers,

As you recounted—felt the saint aggrieved?

Well might he—I allowed! for his half share

More than one hundred! To Sir

Iris

Sec! you dare

In ultimate the whole Order—yet should I,

A junior, a sole voice, have the power to change

The evil way, had they been firm in it?

Answer me!

Prief

Oh, the son of Ireland's Duke,

And that son's wealth, the father's influence too,

In the young arm, we'll even say, my boys

—The fear of losing or diverting the

Into another channel, by unsaying

A novice too abruptly, could not influence

The Order! You might join, for aught they cared.

Their red cross rivals of the Temple! Well,

I thank you for my part, at all events.

Stay here till they withdraw you ! You 'll inhabit
My palace—sleep, perchance, in the alcove
Whither I go to meet our holy friend. "

Good ! and now disbelieve me if you can,—
This is the first time for long years I enter
Thus [*lifts the arras*] without feeling just as if I lifted
The lid up of my tomb

Lays. They share his crime !

God's punishment will overtake you yet.

Prof. 'Thank you it does not ! Pardon this last flash :
I bear a sober viage presently
With the disinterested Nuncio here—

His purchase-morcy safe at Murcia, too !

Let me repeat—for the first time, no draught

Coming as from a sepulchre salutes me.

When we next meet, this folly may have passed,

We 'll hope. Ha, ha ! [*Goes through the arras*

Lays. Assure me but . . . he 's gone !

He could not lie. Then what have I escaped,

I, who had so nigh given up happiness

For ever, to be linked with him and them !

Oh, opportunist of discoveries ! I

Their Knight ? I utterly renounce them all !

Hark ! What, he meets by this the Nuncio ? yes,

The same hyacinth-grown like laughter ! Quick—

To Djabal ! I am one of them at last.

These simple-hearted Druses—Amal's wife !

Djabal ! She 's mine at last. Djabal, I say ! [*Goes.*

ACT IV.

Enter DJABAL.

Dja. Let me but slay the Prefect. The end now !
 To-morrow will be time enough to pry
 Into the means I took : suffice, they served,
 Ignoble as they were, to hurl revenge
 True to its object. [*Seeing the robe, etc. disposed.*

Mine should never so
 Have hurried to accomplishment ! Thee, Djabal,
 Far other mood befitted ! Calm the Robe
 Should clothe this doom's awarder !

[*Taking the robe.*] Shall I dare
 Assume my nation's Robe ? I am at least
 A Druse again, chill Europe's policy
 Drops from me. I dare take the Robe. Why not
 The Tiar ? I rule the Druses, and what more
 Betokens it than rule ?—yet—yet—

[*Lays down the tiar.*
[Footsteps in the alcove.] He comes ! [*Taking the sword.*
 If the Sword serve, let the Tiar lie ! So, feet
 Clogged with the blood of twenty years can fall
 Thus lightly ! Round me, all ye ghosts ! He'll lift
 Which arm to push the arras wide ?—or both ?
 Stab from the neck down to the heart—there stay !
 Near he comes—the next footstep ! Now !

[*As he reaches for the arras, ANAN is discovered.*

Ha! Anael! Nay, my Anael, ⁿcan it be?
 I heard you the trumpet? I must slay him here,
 And here you ruin all! Why speak you not?
 Anael, the Prefect comes! [ANAEL screams.] So slow
 to feel!

'T is not sight for you to look upon?
 A moment's work—but such work! Till you go,
 I must be idle—idle, I risk all!

[Pointing to her hair.

Those locks are well, and you are beautiful thus,
 But with the dagger 't is, I have to do!

An. With mine!

Dja. Blood—Anael?

An. Djabal, 't is thy deed!

It must be! I had hoped to claim it mine—
 Be worthy thee but I must needs confess
 'T was not I, but thyself . . . not I have . . . Djabal!
 Speak to me!

Dja. Oh, my punishment!

An. Speak to me

While I can speak! touch me, despite the blood!
 When the command passed from thy soul to mine,
 I went, fire leading me, muttering of thee,
 And the approaching exultation,—“Take
 “One sacrifice!” I said,—and he sat there,
 Bade me approach, and, as I did approach,
 Thy fire with music burst into my brain.
 'T was but a moment's work, thou might'st perchance
 It may have been so! Well, it is thy deed!

Dja It is my deed !

An His blood all this !—this ! and . .
 And more ! Sustain me, Djabal ! Wait not—now
 Let flush thy glory ! Change thyself and me !
 It must be ! Ere the Druses flock to us !
 At least confirm me ! Djabal, blood gushed forth—
 He was our tyrant—but I looked he'd fall
 Prone as asleep—why else is death called sleep ?
 Sleep ? He bent o'er his breast ! I is sin, I know,—
 Punish me, Djabal, but wilt thou let him ?
 Be it thou that punishest, not he—who creeps
 On his red breast—is he ! I is the small groan
 Of a child—no worse ! Bestow the new life, then !
 Too swift it cannot be, too strange, surpassing !

[*Fell' ng 'n up a id down.*]

Now ! Change us both ! Change me and change thou !

Dja [*sinks on his knees*] Thus !
 Behold my change ! You have done nobly ! I !—

An Can Hakeem kneel ?
Dja. No Hakeem, and scarce Djabal !

I have spoken falsely, and this woe is come.
 No—he ! me ere scorn ! blast me ! Once and ever,
 The deed is mine ! Oh think upon the past !

* *An* [*to herself.*] Did I strike once, or twice, or many
 times ?

Dja. I came to lead my tribe where, bathed in
 glooms,
 Doth Bahamid the Renovator sleep :
 Anael, I saw my tribe. I said, "Without

A miracle this cannot be—I said
 Be there a miracle!—for I saw you!
An. His head lies south the portal!

Dja. —Weighed with this
 The general good, how could I choose my own?
 What matter was my purity of soul?
 Little by little I engaged myself—
 Heaven would accept me for its instrument,
 I hoped I said Heaven had accepted me!
An. Is it this blood breeds dreams in me?—Who
 said

You were not Hakem? And your miracles—
 The fire that plays innocuous round your form?
[I am changing her whole manner.]

Ah, thou wouldst try me, thou art Hakem still!
Dja. Woe woe! As if the Druses of the Mount
 (Scuze Arabs, even there, but here, in the Isle,
 Beneath their former selves) should comprehend
 The subtle lore of Empire! A few secrets
 That would not easily affect the meanest
 Of the crowd there, could wholly subjugate
 The best of our poor time! Again that eye?

An. [after a pause springs to his neck.] Djabal, in this
 there can be no deceit!

Why, Djabal, were you human only,—think,
 Maani is but human, Khalil human,
 Loys is human even—did their words
 Haunt me, their looks pursue me?—Come on you
 So to have tried me! Rather, change to me

So to need trying! Could I, with the Prefect
 And the blood, there—could I see only you?
 —Hanz by your neck over this gulf of blood?
 Speak, I am saved! Speak, Djabal! Am I saved?

[As Djabal utters these words, a murmur is heard
 of a distant storm.]

If kcem would save not! In you ut Dj Lal! Crouch!
 Bow to the dust, thou bravest of our land!
 The pile of thee, I reared up to the cloud—
 Full midway, of our fathers trod the tomb,
 Based on the living rock, deformed but by
 The unstable desert's jaws of sand fall prone!
 The music, quenched—and now thou hast there
 A ruin, obscene creatures will surround thee!
 Let us come, Djabal!

Dja.

Whither come?

An.

At once—

I lest so it grow intolerable—Come!
 Will I not share it with thee? I stave it once
 So, feel less pain! Let them deride my tribe
 Now trusting in thee,—Love shall defend!
 Come to them, hand in hand, with me.

Dja.

Where come?

• *An.* Where?—to the Druses thou hast wronged! Con-
 fess,

Now that the end is gained—(I love thee now—)
 That thou hast so deceived them—(perchance love thee
 Better than ever!)—Come, receive their doom
 Of infamy! O, best of all I love thee!

Shame with the man, no triumph with the God,
Be mine! Come!

Dja Never! More shame yet? and why?
Why? You have called this deed mine—it is mine!
And with it I accept its circumstance.
How can I longer strive with fate? The past
Is past: my false life shall henceforth show true.
Hear me! The argosies touch land by this,
They bear us to fresh scenes and happier skies
What if we join together?—if we keep
Our secret for the Druses' good?—by means
Of even their superstition, plant in them
New life? I learn from Europe all who seek
Man's good must awe man, by such means as these.
We two will be divine to them—we are!
All great works in this world spring from the ruins
Of greater projects—ever, on our earth,
Babels men block out, Babylons they build.
I wrest the weapon from your hand! I claim
The deed! Retire! You have my ring—you bar
All access to the Nuncio till the forces
From Venice land!

An Thou wilt fawn Hakeem then?

Dja, [putting the Tiara of Hakeem on his head.] And
from this moment that I dare open wide
Eyes that till now refused to see, begins
My true dominion: for I know myself,
And what am I to personate. No word?

It is come on me at last! His blood on her —
 What memories will follow that! Her eye,
 Her fierce distorted lip and ploughed black brow!
 Ah, too! Has Europe then so poorly tamed
 The Syrian blood from out thee? Thou, presume
 'To work in this foul earth by means not foul?
 Scheme, as for heaven, but, on the earth, be glad
 If a least ray like heaven's be left thee!

Thus

I shall be calm—in readiness—no way
 Surprised.

[A noise without.]

This should be Khalil and my Druses!
 Venice is come then! Thus I grasp thee, sword!
 Druses, 't is Hakeem saves you! In! Behold
 Your Prefect!

Enter LOYS. DJABAL hides the Thandjes in his robe.

Loys. Oh, well found, Djabal!—but no time for
 words.

You know who waits there? [Points, to the above.

Well!—and that 't is there

He meets the Nuncio? • Well! Now, a surprise—
 He there—

• *Dja.* I know—

Loys. —is now no mortal's lord,

Is absolutely powerless—call him, dead—
 He is no longer Prefect—you are Prefect!
 Oh shrink not! I do nothing in the dark,
 Nothing unworthy Breton blood, believe!

I understood at once your urgency
That I should leave this isle for Rhodes ; I felt
What you were loath to speak—your need of help.
I have fulfilled the task, that earnestness
Imposed on me ; have, face to face, confronted
The Prefect in full Chapter, charged on him
The enormities of his long rule : he stood
Mute, offered no defence, no crime denied.
On which, I spoke of you, and of your tribe,
Your faith so like our own, and all you urged
Of old to me—I spoke, too, of your goodness,
Your patience—brief, I hold henceforth the Isle
In charge, am nominally lord,—but you,
You are associated in my rule—
Are the true Prefect ! Ay, such faith had they
In my assurance of your loyalty
(For who insults an imbecile old man ?)
That we assume the Prefecture this hour !
You gaze at me ! Hear greater wonders yet—
I throw down all the fabric I have built !
These Knights, I was prepared to worship—but
Of that another time ; what's now to say,
Is—I shall never be a Knight ! Oh, Djahab,
Here first I throw all prejudice aside,
And call you brother ! I am Druse like you !
My wealth, my friends, my power, are wholly yours,
Your people's, which is now my people : for
There is a maiden of your tribe, I love—
She loves me—Khalil's sister—

Djé

Anael? •

I js

Start you?

Seem what I say, unknighly? Thus it chanced:

When first I came, a novice, to the isle . . .

*Enter one of the Nuncio's guards from the alcove.**Guard* Oh horr'le! See! Loys! Here is Loys!

And here—

*[Oth enters from the alcove.**[Points to Djabal]* Secure him, bind him—this is he!*[Exit in with Djabal]**I js.* Madmen—what is 't you do? Stand from my friend,

And tell me!

Guard Thou must have no part in this—
Surely no part! But slay him not! 'The Nuncio
Commanded, slay him not!*I js*

Speak, or . . .

Guard

• The Prefect

Lies murdered there by him thou dost embrace.

Loys By Djabal? Miserable woe! How Djabal?*[A Guard left Djabal's side, Djabal flings down the khandjar.]**Loys* *[after a pause]* Thou hast received some insult
worse than all,

Some outrage not to be endured—

• • • *[To the Guards]* Stand back!He is my friend—more than my friend! Thou hast
Slain him upon that provocation!*Guard* •

No!

No provocation ! 'T is a long devised
 Conspiracy : the whole tribe is involved.
 He is their Khalif—'t is on that pretence—
 Their mighty Khalif who died long ago,
 And now comes back to life and light again—
 All is just now revealed, I know not how,
 By one of his confederates—who, struck
 With horror at this murder, first apprised
 The Nuncio. As 't was said, we find this Djabal
 Here where we take him

Dja [*Aside*] Who broke faith with me ?

Loys. [*to DJAPAL*] Hear'st thou ? Speak ! Till thou
 speak, I keep off these,

Or die with thee. Deny this story ! Thou
 A Khalif, an impostor ? Thou, my friend,
 Whose tale was of an inoffensive race,
 With . . . but thou know'st —on that tale's truth I pledged
 My faith before the Chapter : what art thou ?

Dja Loys, I am as thou hast heard. All 's true !
 No more concealment ! As these tell thee, all
 Was long since planned. Our Druses are enough
 To crush this handful the Venetians land
 Even now in our behalf. Loys, we part !
 Thou, serving much, wouldst fain have served me more :
 It might not be. I thank thee. As thou hearest,
 We are a separated tribe : farewell !

Loys. Oh where will truth be found now ? Canst
 thou so
 Belie the Druses ? Do they share thy crime ?

Those thou professest of our Breton stock,
 Are partners with thee? Why, I saw but now
 Khalil, my friend—he spoke with me—no word
 Of this! and Anael—whom I love, and who
 Loves me—she spoke no word of this!

Dja. Poor boy!

Anael, who loves thee? Khalil, fast thy friend?
 We, offsets from a wandering Count of Dixux?
 No—older than the oldest—princeher
 Than Europe's princeliest tribe are we. Enough
 I or thee, that on our simple futh we found
 A monarchy to shame your monarchies
 At their own trick and secret of success
 The child of this our tribe shall laugh upon
 The palace-step of him whose life ere night
 Is forfeit, as that child shall know, and yet
 Shall laugh there! What, we Druses wait forsooth
 The kind interposition of a boy
 --Can only save ourselves if thou concede?
 —Khalil admire thee? He is my right hand,
 My delegate!—Anael accept thy love?
 She is my bride!

Lays. Thy bride? She one of them?

•*Dja.* My bride!

Lays. And she retains her glorious eyes!
 She, with those eyes, has shared this miscreant's guilt!
 Ah—who but she directed me to find
 Djabal within the Prefect's chamber? Khalil
 Bade me seek Djabal there, too! All is truth!

What spoke the Prefect worse of them than this?
 Did the Church ill to institute long since
 Perpetual warfare with such serpentry?
 And I—have I desired to shift my part,
 Evade my share in her design? 'T is well!

Dja. Loys, I have wronged thee—but unwittingly:
 I never thought there was in thee a virtue
 That could attach itself to what thou deemest
 A race below thine own. I wronged thee, Loys,
 But that is over: all is over now,
 Save the protection I ensure against
 My people's anger. By their Khalif's side,
 Thou art secure and may'st depart: so, come!

Loys. Thy side?—I take protection at thy hand?

Enter other Guards.

Guards. Fly with him! Fly, Sir Loys! 'T is too true!

And only by his side thou may'st escape!
 The whole tribe is in full revolt: they flock
 About the palace—will be here—on thee—
 And there are twenty of us, we the Guards
 O' the Nuncio, to withstand them! Even we
 Had stayed to meet our death in ignorance,
 But that one Druse, a single faithful Druse,
 Made known the horror to the Nuncio: Fly!
 The Nuncio stands aghast. At least let us
 Escape thy wrath, O Hakeem! We are brought
 In thy tribe's persecution! [*To Loys.*] Keep by him!
 They hail him Hakeem, their dead Prince returned:

He is their God, they shout, and at his beck
Are life and death !

[*Loys springs, at the khandjar DJABAL had thrown
down, seizes him by the throat.*]

Thus by his side am I !
Thus I resume my knighthood and its warfare,
Thus end thee, miscreant, in thy pride of place !
Thus art thou caught. Without, thy dupes my cluster
Friends aid thee, foes avoid thee, —thou art Hakeem,
How say they ?—God art thou ! but also here
Is the least, youngest, meanest the Church calls
Her servant, and his single arm avails
To aid her as she lists. I rise, and thou
Art crushed ! Hordes of thy Druse flock without :
Here thou hast me, who represent the Cross,
Honour and Faith, 'gainst Hell, Mahomet and thee !
Die ! [DJABAL remains calm] Implore my mercy,
Hakeem, that my scorn

May help me ! Nay, I cannot ply thy trade,
I am no Druse, no stabber and thine eye,
Thy form, are too much as they were my friend
Had such ! Speak ! Beg for mercy at my foot !

[DJABAL still silent.]

Heaven could not ask so much of me—not, sure,
So much ! I cannot kill him so !

Thou art
Strong in thy cause, then !—dost outbrave us, then !
Heardst thou that one of thine accomplices,
Thy very people, has accused thee ? Meet

His charge ! 'Thou hast not even slain the Prefect
 As thy own vile creed warrants. Meet that Druse !
 Come with me and disprove him—be thou tried
 By him, nor seek appeal ! Promise me this,
 Or I will do God's office ! What, shalt thou
 Boast of assassins at thy beck, yet truth
 Want even an executioner ? Consent,
 Or I will strike—look in my face—I will !

Dia. Give me again my khindjar, if thou darest !

[*He gives it.*]

Let but one Druse accuse me, and I plunge
 This home—A Druse betray me ? Let us go !

[*Aside*] Who has betrayed me ? [Shouts without]

Hearst thou ? I hear

No plainer than thou, ye us—so I heard
 That shout—but no die now ! They return !
 Wilt thou be leader with me, Loys ? Well !

ACT V.

*The Uninited Druses, filling the hall tumultuously, and
 flocking together.*

Here flock we, obeying the summons. Lo, Hakeem
 hath appeared, and the Prefect is dead, and we return
 Lebanon ! My manufacture of goats' fleeces must, I doubt,
 soon fall away there. Come, old Nasif—link thine arm
 in mine—we fight, if needs be. Come, what is a great

right word?—"Lebanon?" (My daughter! my daughter!)

But is Khail to have the office of Hinnah?—No, say, rather, if he be wise, the monopoly of beehives and cloves. Where is Hakeem?—"The only prophet I ever saw, prophesied at Cairo once, in my youth—a little black Copht, dressed all in black too, with a great stripe of yellow cloth flapping down behind him like the back fin of a water-serpent. Is this he? Bi mi llah! Biamreh! HAKEEM!"

Enter the VUNCO and Guards.

Vuncw [to his Attendants Hold] both, the sojourners and this accomplice

Ye talk of that accuseth him—And tell

Su Loys he is mine, the Chamber-lord

Had I not approve him (honor) I should

To this black discharge you of the blood

[To the Druses] Ah children! bit a sight for these old

eyes

That kept themselves alive this voyage though

To snare their very last on you! I come

To gather one and all you wandering sheep

Into my fold, as though a father came

As though, in coming, a father should

•

[To his Guards.] (Ten, twelve

—Twelve guards of you, and not an outlet? None?

The wizards stop each avenue? Keep close!)

[To the Druses] Now if one came to a son's house, I say,

So did I come—no guard with me—to find

Alas—alas!

A Druse. Who is the old man?

Another.

Oh, ye are to shout!

Children, he styles you.

Druses.

Ay, the Prefect's slain!

Hory to the Khalif, our Father!

Nuncio.

Even so!

[And (ye prompt aright) your father slain!

While most he plotted for your good, that father

Alas, how kind, ye never knew)—lies slain!

Aside.] (And hell's worm gnaw the glozing knave—with me,

For being duped by his cajoleries!

Are these the Christians? These the docile crew

My bezants went to make me Bishop o'er?)

[*To his Attendants, who whisper.*] What say ye does this wizard style himself?

Hakeem? Biamrallah? The third Fatemite?

What is this jargon? He—the insane Khalif,

Dead near three hundred years ago, come back

In flesh and blood again?

Druses.

He mutters! Hear ye?

He is blaspheming Hakeem. The old man

Is our dead Prefect's friend! Tear him!

Nuncio.

We dare not!

I stand here with my five-and-seventy years

The Patriarch's power behind me. Come, move

Those who have dared withstand the Patriarch's power

And see what fate awaits them!

And now, ye see, ye see, ye see, ye see, ye see,

By sorceries, cheats—also the same tricks, tried
On my poor children in this nook of the earth,
Could triumph, that have been successively
Exploded, laughed to scorn, all nations through.

"*Romaiot, Ioudaioi kai proselutoi,*

"Cretes and Arabians"—you are duped the last!

Said I, refrain from tearing me? I pray ye

Tear me! Shall I return to tell the Patriarch

That so much love was wasted—every gift

Rejected, from his benison I brought,

Down to the galley full of bezants, sunk

An hour since at the harbour's mouth, by that . . .

That . . . never will I speak his hated name!

[*To his Servants.*] What was the name his fellow ship-
fetter

Called their arch-wizard by? [*they whisper.*] Oh, Djabal
was 't?

• *Druses.* But how a sorcerer's false wherein?

Nuncio.

(*Ay, Djabal.*)

How false? Ye know not, Djabal has confessed

Nay, that by tokens found on him we learn

What I sailed hither solely to divulge—

How by his spells the demons were allured

To seize you, not that these be aught save lies

And mere illusions. Is this clear? I say.

By measure of his guilt he would have led you

Into a monstrous sacrifice.

Say, shall we burn him for his tricks, my sons?

Druses. Burn him.

Nuncio. — He of the privilege amerced?
 No! Inmate the Patriarch's men are!
 No! With the Patriarch's licence will I bid
 Tear him to pieces who misled you! Haste!

Druses. The old man's beard shaken, and his eyes are
 white fire! After all, I know nothing of Djabal beyond
 what Karshook says; he knows but what Khalil says,
 who knows just what Djabal says himself. Now, the
 little Copht Prophet, I saw at Cairo in my youth, began
 by promising each bystander three full measures of
 wheat. . . .

Enter KHALIL and the initiated Druses.

Kha. Venice and her deliverance are at hand!
 Their fleet stands through the harbour! Hath he slain
 The Prefect yet? Is Djabal's change come yet?

Nuncio. [to Attendants.] What's this of Venice? Who's
 this boy?

[Attendants *whisper.*] One Khalil?
 Djabal's accomplice, Loys called, but now,
 The only Druse, save Djabal's self, to fear?

[*To the Druses.*] I cannot hear ye with these aged
 ears.

Is it so? Ye would have my troops assist?
 Would he abet him in his sorceries?

Down with the cheat, guards, as my child would!

[*They spring at Nuncio, and drive him back.*

Kha. No more bloodshed! Spare the young!

Whom? — I mean — I mean — Khalil — whom my
 child —

Thou know'st not what these know, what these declare.
 I am an old man, as thou sees—have done
 With life; and that should move me but the truth?
 Art thou the only land one of thy tribe?
 'Tis I interpret for thy tribe!

Kha. Oh, this
 Is the expected Nuncio! Druses, hear—
 Endure ye this? Unworthy to partake
 The glory *Hakem* gains; while I speak,
 The ships touch land, who make for Lebanon?
 They plant the winged lion in these halls!

Nuncio. [*Aside.*] If it be true! Venice?—Oh, never
 true!

Yet Venice would so gladly thwart our Knights,
 And fain get footing here, stand close by Rhodes!
 Oh, to be duped this way!

Kha. Ere he appear
 And lead you gloriously, repent, I say!

Nuncio. [*Aside.*] Nor any way to stretch the arch
 wizard, stark

Ere the Venetians come? Cut off the head,
 The trunk were easily stilled. [*To the Druses.*] He?
 Bring him forth!

• Since so your needs will have it, I assent!
 You'd needs him, say you, on the spot? conjuring
 The sorcerer of the very circle? Where's
 Our short, stout, yellow friend who said
 He'd answer to the question, by one stroke
 Bring Djabal, with a wave!

Druses. Ay, bring him forth !
The Patriarch drives a trade in all and silk,
And we're the Patriarch's children—true men, we !
Where is the glory ? Show us all the glory !

Kha. You dare not so insult him ! What, not see . . .
(*I tell thee, Nuncio, these are uninstructed.*
Untrusted—they know nothing of our Khan !)
—Not see that if he lets a doubt arise
'T is but to give yourselves the chance of seeming
To have some influence in your own Return !
That all may say ye would have trusted him
Without the all-convincing glory—ay,
And did ! Embrace the occasion, friends ! For, think—
What wonder when his change takes place ? But now
For your sakes, he should not reveal himself !
No—could I ask and have, I would not ask
The change yet !

Enter DJABAL and LOYS.

Spite of all, reveal thyself !
I had said, pardon them for me—for Anael—
For our sakes pardon these besotted men—
Ay, for thine own—they hurt not thee ! Yet now
One thought swells in me and keeps down all else.
This Nuncio couples shame with thee, has called
Hypocrite thy whole course, all false things
Has said, he is but an old friend gone !
Hakeem—nay, I must tell thee that now—
Reveal thyself ! See ! What is Anael ? See !

— Then will be time to try what spells can do !
Dost thou dispute the Republic's power ?

Nuncio.

Lo ye !

He tempts me too, the wily exorcist !
No ! The renowned Republic was and is
The Patriarch's friend · 't is not for courting Venice
That I—that these implore thy blood of me !
Lo ye, the subtle miscreant ! Ha, so subtle ?
Ye, Druses, hear him ! Will ye be deceived ?
How he evades me ! Where 's the miracle,
He works ? I bid him to the proof—fish up
Your galley full of servants that he sank !
That were a miracle ! One miracle !
Enough of trifling, for it chafes my years,
I am the Nuncio, Druses ! I stand forth
To save you from the good Republic's rage
When she shall find her fleet was summoned here
To aid the mummeries of a knave like this !

[As the Druses hesitate, his Attendants whisper.]

Ab, well suggested ! Why, we hold the while
One who, his close confederate till now,
Confesses Djabal at the last a cheat,
And every miracle a cheat ! Who throws me
His head ? I make three offers, once I offer—
And twice—

Djab. Let who moves beneath my foot !

Ma. Thanks, Hakeem, thanks !
Why tarry then ?

Druses *[to each other]* He can ! He can ! I've fire—

[To the NUNCIO,] I say he can; old man! 'thou know'st him not—

Live fire like that thou seest now in his eyes,
Plays frowning round him. See! The change begins!
All the brow lightens as he lifts his arm!
Look not at me! It was not I!

Dja. What Druse
Accused me, as he saith? I bid each bone
Crumble within that Druse! None, I oys, none
Of my own people, as thou said'st, have rused
A voice against me.

Nuncio. [*Aside.*] Venice to come! Death!

Dja. [*continuing.*] Confess and go unscathed, however
false!

Seest thou my Druses, Luke? I would submit
To thy pure malice did one Druse confess!
How said I, I oys?

Nuncio. [*to his Attendants who whisper.*] Ah, ye
counsel so?

[*Aloud.*] Bring in the witness, then, who, first of all,
Disclosed the treason! Now I have thee wizard!
Ye hear that? If one speaks, he bids you tear him
Joint after joint: well then, one does speak! One,
Is fooled by Djahal, even as yourselves,
But who hath voluntarily proposed
To expiate, by confessing thus, the fault
Of having trusted him?

Lays. *Then bring in a veiled Druse.*
Now Djahal, now!

Nuncio Friend, Djabal fronts thee! Make a ring,
sons!—Speak!

Expose this Djabal—what he was, and how;
The wiles he used, the aims he cherished; all,
Explicitly as late 't was spoken to these
My servants. I absolve and pardon thee.

Loys. Thou hast the dagger ready, Djabal?

Dja.

Speak,

Recreant!

Drusus. Stand back, fool! farther! Suddenly
You shall see some huge serpent glide from under
The empty vest, or down will thunder crash!
Back, Khalil!

Kha. I go back? Thus go I, back!

[*To AN.*] Unveil! Nay, thou shalt face the Khalil!
Thus!

[*He tears away ANAPL's veil, DJABAL folds his arms
and bows his head the Druses fall back LOYS
springs from the side of DJABAL and the NUNCIO*

Loys. Then she was true—she only of them all!
True to her eyes—may keep those glorious eyes,
And now be mine, once again mine! Oh, Anael!
Dared I think thee a partner in his crime—
That blood could soil that hand? nay, 't is mine—Anael,
—Not mine?—Who offer thee before all these
My heart, my sword, my name—~~as thou wilt say~~
That Djabal, who affirms thou art his bride,
Lies—say but that he lies!

Dja.

Thou, Anael?

Loys. Nay Djabal, nay, ~~one~~ chance for me—the last !
 Thou hast had every other ; thou hast spoken
 Days, nights, what falsehood listed thee—let me
 Speak first now ; I will speak now !

Nunuo.

Loys, pause !

Thou art the Duke's son, Bretagne's choicest stock,
 Loys of Dreux, God's sepulchre's first sword :
 This wilt thou spit on, this degrade, this trample
 To earth ?

Loys. [*to AN.*] Who had foreseen that one day. Loys
 Would stake these gifts against some other good
 In the whole world ? I give them thee ! I would
 My strong will might bestow real shape on them,
 That I might see, with my own eyes, thy foot
 Tread on their very neck ! 'T is not by gifts
 I put aside this Djabal : we will stand—
 We do stand, see, two men ! Djabal, stand forth
 Who's worth her, I or thou ? I—who for Anael
 Uprightly, purely kept my way, the long
 True way—left thee each by-path, boldly lived
 Without the lies and blood, —or thou, or thou ?
 Me !—love me, Anael ! •Leave the blood and him !
 [*To DJA.*] Now speak—now, quick on this that I have
 said,—

Thou with the blood, speak if thou art a man !

Dja. [*to AN.*] And was it thou betrayedst me ? 'T is
 well !

I have deserved this of thee, and submit.
 Nor 't is much evil thou inflictest : life

Ends here The cedars shall not wave for us.
 For there was crime, and must be punishment.
 See fate ! By thee I was seduced ! By thee
 I perish . yet do I — can I repent ?
 I with my Arab instinct, thwarted ever
 By my Frank policy, — and with, in turn,
 My Frank brain, thwarted by my Arab heart —
 While these remained in equipoise, I lived
 — Nothing , had either been predominant,
 As a Frank schemer or an Arab mystic,
 I had been something, — now, each has destroyed
 The other — and behold, from out their crash,
 A third and better nature rises up —
 My mere man's nature ! And I yield to it :
 I love thee, I who did not love before !

An. Djabal !

Dja. It seemed love, but it was not love —
 How could I love while thou adoredst me ?
 Now thou despisest, art above me so
 Immeasurably ! Thou, no other, doomest
 My death now , this my steel shall execute
 Thy judgment , I shall feel thy hand in it !
 Oh, luxury to worship, to submit,
 Transcended, doomed to death by thee !

An.

My Djabal !

Dja. Dost hesitate ? I force thee then ! Approach,
 Druses !, for I am out of reach of fate ;
 No further evil waits me. Speak the doom !
 Hear, Druses, and hear, Nuncio, and hear, Loy :

Ah HAKCEM !

[She falls dead

• [The Druses scream, grovelling / / him

Ah Hakcem !—not on me thy wrath !

Dimillah, pardon ! never doubted I !

His dog, how saye I thou ?

[They surround and seize the NUNCIO and his guards
LOVE flings himself upon the body of ANABEL, on
which DIABOL continues to gaze as stupified

Nuncio

Caiffes ! Have ye eyes ?

Whips, racks should teach you ! What, his fools ? his
dupes ?

I gave me ! unhand me !

Alas [approaching DJABAL timidly] Save her for my
sake !

She was already thine, she would have shued

To lay thine exaltation think, this day

Her hour was plaited thus because of thee !

Y's feel the soft bright hour—feel !

Vincio [struggling with those who have seized him]

What, because

His leman dies for him ? You think it hard

To die ? Oh, would you were at Rhodes, and choise

Of deaths should suit you !

Alas [bending over ANABEL's body] Just restore her
life !

So little does it ! there—the eyelids tremble !

I was not my breath that made them, and the lips

Move of themselves, I could restore her life !

Hakcem, we have forgotten—have presumed

On our free converse : we are better taught.
 See, I kiss—how I kiss thy garment's hem
 For her ! She kisses it—Oh, take her deed
 In mine ! Thou dost believe now, Anael ?—See,
 She smiles ! Were her lips open o'er the teeth
 Thus, when I spoke first ? She believes in thee !
 Go not without her to the cedars, lord !
 Or leave us both—I cannot go alone !
 I have obeyed thee, if I dare so speak :
 Hath Hakeem thus forgot all Djabal knew ?
 Thou feelest then my tears fall hot and fast
 Upon thy hand, and yet thou speakest not ?
 Ere the Venetian trumpet sound—ere thou
 Exalt thyself, O Hakeem ! save thou her !
Nuncio. And the accursed Republic will arrive
 And find me in their toils—dead, very like,
 Under their feet !

What way—not one way yet
 To foil them ? None ? *[Observing DJABAL'S face.*
 What ails the Khalif ? Ah,
 That ghastly face ! A way to foil them yet !
[To the Druses.] Look to your Khalif, Druses ! Is that
 face
 God Hakeem's ? Where is triumph,—where is . . . what
 Said he of exaltation—hath he promised
 So much to-day ? Why then, exalt thyself !
 Cast off that husk, thy form ; set free thy soul
 In splendour ! Now, bear witness ! here I stand—
 I challenge him exalt himself, and I

Become, for that, O Druse like all of you !

The Druses. Exalt thyself ! Exalt thyself, O Hakeem !

Dja. [*advances*] I can confess now all from first to
last.

There is no longer a name for me. I am . . .

*[Her, the Venetian trumpet sounds—the Druses shout,
he catches the expression of those about him, and,
as the old dream comes back, he is again confident and
inspired.]*

—Am I not Hakeem ? And ye would have crawled
But yesterday within these impure courts
Where now ye stand erect !—Not grand enough ?
—What more could be conceded to such beasts
As all of you, so sunk and base as you,
Than a mere man ?—A man among such beasts
Was miracle enough : yet him you doubt,
Him you forsake, him fain would you destroy—
With the Venetians at your gate, the Nuncio
Thou,—(see the baffled hypocrite !) and, best,
The Prefect there !

Druses No, Hakeem, ever thine !

Nuncio. He lies—and twice he lies—and thrice he
lies !

I exalt myself, Mahound ! Exalt thyself !

Dja. Druses ! we shall henceforth be far away—
Out of mere mortal ken—above the cedar—
But we shall see ye go, hear ye return,
Repeople the old solitudes,—through thee,
My Khabl ! Thou art full of me—I fill

Thou full—n hands thus fill thee ! Yesterday
 —Nay, but this morn, I deemed thee ignorant
 Of all to do, requiring word of mine
 To teach it now, thou hast all gifts in one,
 With truth and purity go other gifts,
 All gifts come clustering to that. Go, lead
 My people home what'er betide !

[Turning to the Druses] Ye take
 Thus Khalil for my delegate ? To him
 Bow as to me ? He leads to Lebanon—
 Ye follow ?

Druses. We follow ! Now exalt thyself !

Dja. [raises Loys] Then to thee, Loys ! How I
 wronged thee, Loys !

—Yet, wronged, no less thou shalt have full revenge,
 Fit for thy noble self, revenge—and thus
 Thou, loaded with such wrongs, the princely soul
 The first sword of Christ's sepulchre—thou shalt
 Guard Khalil and my Druses home again !

Justice, no less—God's justice and no more,
 For those I leave !—to seeking this, devote
 Some few days out of thy Knight's brilliant life
 And, thus obtained them, leave their Lebanon,
 My Druses' blessing in thine ears—(they shall
 Bless thee with blessing sure to have its way)

—One cedar-blossom in thy ducal cap,
 One thought of Anael in thy heart,—perchance,
 One thought of him who thus, to bid thee speed,
 Has led you to the living springs ! This done,

Resume thy course, and, first amid the host •
 In Europe, take thy heart along with thee !
 Go boldly, go securely, go augustly—
 What shall attend thee then ?

[*He looks at ANASTAS.*] And last to thee !
 I dream I dream I was to have, this day,
 The I thee ? A vain dream—hast thou not
 Won greater exaltation ? What remains
 But press to thee, exalt myself to thee ?
 Thus I exalt myself, set free my soul !

[*He sits himself as before, supported by KHALIL and LOYS,
 the VENERABLE enters the ADMIRAL advances*

Admiral God and St Mark for Venice ! Plant the
 Lion !

[*At the dash of the plumed standard, the Druses shout, and
 move tumultuously forward, LOYS takes in his sword*

Dja [*leading them a few steps between KHALIL and
 LOYS*]

On to the Mountain ! At the Mountain, Druses !

[*Dies.*

END OF VOL. III.

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